

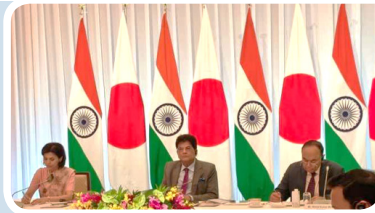


No diplomatic deal possible with Iran 'savages': Netanyahu

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'India-Japan trade could reach \$50 bn by 2030'



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Lyon's Australia Spot Faces Fresh Pressure



Himalayan tsunami hits Nepal

**112 killed
760 missing**

Over 400 Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims and travellers have lost contact after raging waters tore through Nepal's Rasuwa dist

India joins rescue operations, dispatches 10 tonnes of aid, IAF deploys two aircraft with relief material.

Six Bihar districts are preparing for a possible rise in the Gandak river, a major transboundary Himalayan river flowing through Tibet, Nepal, and India.

Nepal thanks India for medical aid amid flood fury.

133 Indian tourists, 37 NRIs among missing

KATHMANDU

A flash flood that ripped through Nepal's northern Rasuwa district has rapidly become a cross-border emergency, leaving at least 100 people dead, cutting off over 400 pilgrims and travellers, and triggering a flood alert hundreds of kilometres downstream in Bihar.

The flooding washed away vehicles, goods, bridges and other infrastructure, while several hydropower projects were also damaged.

37 NRIs missing

As per the preliminary list compiled by the Nepal Tourism Board, 403 travellers, including 291 foreign nationals and 93 Nepali nationals, have been reported missing or unreachable.

The foreign nationals include 133 Indians and 37 NRIs. They were reportedly heading towards the Rasuwagadhi border checkpoint for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra when the Bhote Koshi River surged through the Nepal-China frontier region around 9 am. The list also includes travellers from the US, Malaysia, the UK, South Africa, Australia and the Netherlands, while the nationalities of some others are yet to be confirmed.

According to reports, over 300 people had been rescued by Wednesday afternoon. Officials have stressed that "reportedly missing" does not necessarily



Nepal PM urges nation to 'stand together'

Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra Shah urged the Himalayan nation to stand united after devastating flood on Wednesday killed at least 95 people. "Please be patient. The government takes full responsibility for your rescue, treatment, food and shelter. In times of such a disaster, we all need to stand together," Shah said in a statement, posted on social media. "I stand before you today with a heavy heart. The sudden and devastating flood in Rasuwa's Bhote Koshi River has left the entire nation shocked and grieving," Shah said.

ily mean the travellers have been swept away or harmed.

Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims missing

A large number of those out of contact are believed to be pilgrims travelling to Tibet for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.

Bashu Kumar Adhikari, managing director of Kathmandu-based Touch Kailash Travels & Tours, said 390 pilgrims,

including 93 Nepalis, were scheduled to cross the border on Wednesday. "Except for a few, we have not been able to establish contact with the pilgrims as of 3 pm," Adhikari said, as per local media.

Sagar Pandey, president of the Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal, said efforts were underway to contact the pilgrims and assess their condition.

Rescue ops under way

The death toll from the catastrophic flash floods along Nepal's Bhote Koshi and Trishuli river corridors has risen to 95, according to official updates.

The flooding, which originated in the Rasuwa border area and surged downstream, has affected several districts, including Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Dhading and Chitwan.

Police said 93 people have also been injured. Four bodies were recovered from Bidur Municipality in Nuwakot and found near the Trishuli river, police said.

The Nepal Army, Armed Police Force and Nepal Police have been deployed for search-and-rescue operations. Fourteen helicopters, along with drones and sniffer dogs, are being used to locate missing people and assist those stranded in affected areas.

Bihar, UP on high alert

Patna: With the floodwaters moving through Nepal's river system and the possibility of increased discharge into the Gandak River, Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary has ordered vulnerable districts to inspect embankments, intensify night patrols and prepare rescue teams. The crisis has also placed Bihar on guard. The Indian government has issued an advisory after a sudden rise in the water level of Nepal's Trishuli river at Furke Khola, around 160 km from the Indian border, was reported amid suspected glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) activity near the Nepal-China border. The advisory said the flood wave is expected to move downstream into the Gandak river, with its intensity likely to reduce as it travels. Authorities in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh along the India-Nepal border have been asked to remain alert and closely monitor the situation. Authorities have also been advised to take necessary precautionary measures along the Gandak river. The gates of the Gandak barrage should be operated in a manner that allows the anticipated floodwater to pass through safely.

PM Modi expresses solidarity with Nepal

As Nepal deployed helicopters and security forces for rescue operations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to his Nepalese counterpart Balendra Shah, offered condolences over the loss of lives and said India was ready to provide all possible humanitarian assistance. "Spoke to Prime Minister Balendra Shah and conveyed condolences on the loss of lives due to the floods in Nepal. The people of India stand in solidarity with their sisters and brothers in Nepal at this difficult time," PM Modi posted on X. "Our teams are coordinating closely on rescue and relief efforts," he added.

India rushes relief aid to flood-hit Nepal

India is sending relief material to flood-hit Nepal on Indian Air Force aircraft after massive flash floods swept through several northern districts of the neighbouring country on Wednesday, officials said. The emergency consignment will include medicines, rations and other essential supplies as part of the government's Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) efforts. The government is also preparing to deploy National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel to Nepal to assist with search-and-rescue and relief operations in the affected areas, officials said.

Embassy coordinating with Nepal

The Indian Embassy in Kathmandu is closely coordinating with the Nepal government for the rescue and relief of Indian nationals affected by the flash floods in the Himalayan country, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Wednesday. It also issued emergency numbers for assistance and information related to Indian nationals that have been affected by the flash floods. In an X post, it said people can contact **+977 985 131 6807** or **+977 970 910 7500**.

The Nepal Tourism Board has issued a toll free emergency number **1234** or hotline **1144** or tourist police **9851289445** for help.



The first batch of nine Dasara elephants arrived in Mysuru on Wednesday evening following the traditional Gajapayana ceremony at Veerana Hosahalli of Hunsur taluk. The jumbos will be formally welcomed into the Mysore Palace on Friday.

➤ | HAMPA NAGARAJU

Woman, 5 kids found dead in lake

VIJAYAPURA

The bodies of a middle-aged woman and her five minor children were reportedly found floating in the waters of the historic Bhootanala Lake on the outskirts of the city on Wednesday morning.

The deceased are Shobha Jalageri (45) and her children Vidya (16), Suvarna (14), Goudesh also called Mooga (10), Sanika (7) and Vikasa (5).

Shobha, who was the wife of Malakari Bheemaraya Jalageri, resident of Toravi vil-

lage in the taluk, and their children were reported to be missing since Monday, August 24. Shobha is suspected to have committed suicide by jumping into the Bhootanala Lake after a family fight.

The locals walking near the 322-acre lake on Wednesday morning noticed the bodies of the six people floating on the waters and, finding the matter to be suspicious, informed the police. The fire brigade staff members who arrived at the spot got the bodies out of the waters.

Got time off in B'luru? You can be a 'traffic cop' for a day

BENGALURU: The Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) has brought back its "Cop for the Day" initiative, allowing volunteers to act as citizen traffic cops for a day and get on-ground exposure to real traffic management during peak hours. The Bengaluru Traffic Police shared info on X, asking residents to gain firsthand experience of the challenges faced by traffic personnel, share their experiences, and offer suggestions for safer and

'Woman minister soon'

On women's representation in the Cabinet, he said, "We will have (woman minister). Definitely we'll have. The Congress is committed to the ideology (of woman's empowerment)." "There was a name which was being cleared. 'I think in the next couple of days a woman minister will be inducted.'"

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

Goal: Residents experience peak-hour traffic challenges firsthand and share feedback.
Process: Selected applicants receive one hour of guidance from officers, followed by three hours managing traffic at a chosen junction.
Support: Promoted by leaders like Priyank Karge to build community-police collaboration.

smoother roads. Citizens can register via **BTP AStraM** app and become a cop for the day.

QUICK READ

6 dead after car falls in ditch in J&K's Poonch

Jammu
Six people including two women were killed and three others injured when a vehicle veered off the road and fell into a ditch in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, officials said. The accident took place in Sheldhar area of Surankote and condition of one of the injured, a child, was stated to be critical, they said. "An unfortunate accident occurred this evening, resulting in on-the-spot death of six persons and injuries to three others," Poonch DC Ashok Kumar Sharma said.

Cockroach, gutka: FSSAI notice to Marriott

New Delhi
The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has issued notices to two five-star hotels in New Delhi, JW Marriott, and Andaz, at Aerocity, following raids that uncovered severe food safety lapses and hygiene violations on Wednesday. In yet another safety crackdown, the food safety regulator in a post on X said: "FSSAI has issued notices to Juniper Hotels Pvt Ltd (Andaz, Aerocity, Delhi) and JW Marriott, Delhi following inspections.

LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh has rolled out a new welfare scheme offering free bus travel to elderly women across the state, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced on Wednesday, August 26.

The scheme, named 'Lokmata Ahilyabai Matrushakti Yatra', was formally launched by Adityanath at the Indira Gandhi Pratishthan in Lucknow, where he flagged off a fleet of special buses earmarked for the initiative and met several women who will benefit from it, an official statement said. Speaking at the launch, the

chief minister used the occasion to spotlight the state's broader women's safety infrastructure. He pointed to the network of Mission Shakti centres now operating across UP, along with AI-powered Safe City surveillance systems in every city and an integrated emergency response mechanism built around the 1090 and 112 helplines.

Adityanath struck a stern note on crimes against women, warning that anyone found violating a woman's safety, whether within the home or outside it, would face severe consequences. "If anyone breaches the



safety of a daughter, whether inside the house or outside, then consider it final that the person will have either jail or hell waiting for him," he said.

He also flagged the deployment of women beat officers across the state as a first-of-its-kind measure, claiming it may be the first such initiative anywhere in

Budget provision for scheme

A provision of Rs 100 crore has been made in the First Supplementary Budget for 2026-27 to compensate UPSRTC for implementing the initiative. The reimbursement will ensure that the transport corporation is compensated for the free travel provided to eligible passengers.

What passengers should know

Eligible women are likely to be required to produce a valid government-issued age proof or identity document while travelling. The state government is expected to release detailed guidelines on eligibility, verification, applicable bus services and the implementation timeline.

the country. "This has happened for the first time in

Uttar Pradesh, and perhaps in the country," he said.



Yi Mysuru's 'Samanvaya' celebrates talent and inclusion

MYSURU

Young Indians (Yi), Mysuru, under the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), organised 'SAMANVAYA – Together in Harmony', an inclusive cultural programme to provide children with special needs a platform to showcase their talents and creativity.

The programme, organised by the Yi Mysuru Accessibility Vertical at The Clovers, Mysuru, in collaboration with Project ReachOut, Devdan Foundation Mysuru, InsideOut and SVS Foundation, featured dance, music and cultural performances by

specially-abled children. The programme sought to promote inclusion by creating an environment where children could express themselves confidently and receive recognition for their abilities.

Yi Mysuru Chairperson Priyanka Sridhar said inclusion should go beyond creating accessible physical infrastructure and focus on providing equal opportunities for participation and expression. True inclusion begins when society moves beyond recognising limitations and creates opportunities for every individual's abilities to emerge. Every child deserves a platform, en-

couragement and confidence to express themselves.

Project ReachOut and InsideOut head Adarsh Ramesh stressed the need for meaningful platforms that enable children with special needs to participate in community life. He said collaborations among organisations, volunteers and communities could help children build confidence and demonstrate their creativity.

Devdan Foundation Mysuru's Devaiah Kotera called for greater coordination among organisations and special schools to share knowledge and resources and cre-

ate a stronger support system for children and their families. SVS Foundation representative Kiran Huilgol said the organisation was pleased to support initiatives that translate inclusion into meaningful grassroots action.

The children's cultural performances were the highlight of the event and received enthusiastic appreciation from the audience. The programme also provided an opportunity for participating organisations to explore further collaboration in promoting accessibility, dignity, equal opportunity and social participation.

"SANGOLLI RAYANNA FOUGHT THE BRITISH WITH GUERRILLA WARFARE"

MYSURU

Had Sangolli Rayanna not fought against the British, it would not have been possible to make them bow down in those days. He fought against the tax system and incurred the wrath of the British. Sangolli Rayanna himself is a chapter of history. Though he was the right-hand man of Kittur Rani Chennamma, he never indulged in any anti-national activity," said Renukamba, President of the Kodagu District Consumer Commission.

Speaking at a function organised by Mysore Kannada Vedike here on Wednesday, she said Rayanna was not an educated man, but at a time when there was no advanced technology available for warfare, he used his intelligence and strategic skills to wage guerrilla warfare against the British. He united several small feudatory rulers and fought against the British. It is unfortunate that such a great leader has not received the recognition he deserves at the national level.

Mahadeva Gowda said



Rayanna was betrayed by his own associates, who captured him and handed him over to the British. However, Rayanna did not express anger against them. Instead, he reportedly told them with sadness, "I am fighting for the country, but you have done such a thing." When Rayanna was asked about his last wish before being hanged, he reportedly said that many more Rayannas would be born in the country and would drive the British out. Some people still believe that the descendants of the family which betrayed and handed him over to the British continue to face a curse.

Social worker Raghunath Vajpayee said the names of kings and historical personalities from North India are found on roads in Karnataka and Mysuru. People in the city know about Rani Jhansi because they have a Jhansi Rani Road, but there is no road named after Rayanna. The Government and the City Corporation should immediately name new roads after the great warrior.

Industrialist K.B. Lingaraj said personalities like Rayanna belonged to everyone and should not be viewed through the prism of caste or religion. It is their fortune that such great per-

sonalities were born in their land and they are enjoying freedom and a better life because of their sacrifices.

Presiding over the programme, S. Balakrishna said Sangolli Rayanna, Kittur Rani Chennamma, Kempegowda, Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar and Sir M. Visvesvaraya had made immense contributions to Karnataka. None of them belonged exclusively to any one caste and their contributions are part of our history.

Sangolli Rayanna Sadbhavana Awards

The Sangolli Rayanna Sadbhavana Awards were presented to K.B. Lingaraj, industrialist; Dr. Madegowda, doctor; M.B. Guruswamy, APMC Chairman, Chamara-janagar; the Deputy Editor of Vijayavani; P. Rajeshwari, representing the cooperative sector; Malleth and H.R. Prasanna Kumar, soldiers; Lakshmi R., representing the pourakarmika community; and Somashekar, social worker.

The programme was compered by Salundi C. Dore-swamy. Nala Beedi Ravi was present.

CESC trains officers on electrical safety and accident prevention

MYSURU

The Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Limited (CESC) conducted a one-day training programme for branch officers working in various Operations and Maintenance divisions on electrical safety, prevention of electrical accidents and preparation of estimates.

Former BESCOM Deputy General Manager A. Ramesh, who was the resource person, stressed the need for branch officers to give top priority to the safety of employees, consumers, the public, animals and CESC property, besides ensuring their own safety.

Although the number of electrical accidents had declined considerably in recent years, it had not yet been possible to bring such incidents down to zero. Strict adherence to safety procedures was therefore essential and urged officers to remain vigilant while carrying out electrical works.

Ramesh also called for greater public awareness on



the use of quality electrical appliances carrying star ratings, highlighting their safety and energy-efficiency benefits, and also demonstrated the proper procedures to be followed while preparing estimates.

CESC Training Division Deputy General Manager M.Y. Hema said prevention was more important than finding solutions after an accident had occurred. This principle should be incorporated into the working practices of every employee. "Safety must be given priority over speed during electrical works, and all prescribed

safety measures must be strictly followed," she said.

On the preparation of estimates, Hema stressed that accuracy should be given greater importance than merely the quantity of items listed. Even a minor error in an estimate could result in a difference running into crores of rupees for the corporation, she said, adding that officers had a responsibility to thoroughly scrutinise estimates before approval.

Assistant General Manager of the CESC Training Division Jyothi N. was present on the occasion.

41st National Eye Donation fortnight launched in Mysuru



MYSURU

The 41st National Eye Donation Fortnight was inaugurated in Mysuru on August 25 as part of the National Blindness Control Programme.

The fortnight is being observed from August 25 to September 8, 2026, to create awareness about eye donation among the public.

The inaugural programme was jointly organised by the Mysuru Zilla Panchayat, District Health and Family Welfare Department, District Blindness Control Division, Eye Bank at K.R. Hospital and Government Higher Primary Pailwan Basavayya School, Jayanagar, at the Community Health Centre, Jayanagar, Mysuru.

As part of the programme, students of the school took out an awareness rally through the main roads of Jayanagar. Headmaster Nagraju M.N. flagged off the rally by waving the green flag. Students dis-

tributed pamphlets and raised slogans highlighting the importance of eye donation, including "Eye Donation is a Great Donation" and "Do Not Burn Your Eyes, Donate Your Eyes."

At the inaugural function held at 11.30 a.m., ophthalmologist Manjunath A.S. welcomed the gathering, while ophthalmologist Sudheer H.J. conducted the proceedings. Administrative Medical Officer Dr. Giridhar inaugurated the programme by lighting the lamp. District Blindness Control Programme Implementation Officer Dr. Nagesh P. Aradhya, doctors, ophthalmologists from across the district and health department staff participated.

Dr. Aradhya explained the importance and benefits of eye donation, stating that there is no age restriction for donating eyes. People suffering from conditions such as diabetes, hypertension or poor eyesight, those who have un-

dergone cataract surgery and those suffering from several common ailments can also donate their eyes. However, individuals infected with HIV or hepatitis and those suffering from certain cancers are not eligible.

He urged people willing to donate their eyes to contact the Eye Bank at K.R. Hospital on 0821-2427253, 9738741819 or 8073375034. Eye donors can also register through the "Jeevasarthakathe" app, which also facilitates registration for organ donation.

District Organ Donation Coordinator Vijay H.B. said organs from brain-dead persons can save the lives of up to eight people with the consent of their families. For more information on organ donation, the public may call 1919.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Blindness Control Programme Data Entry Assistant Srinivas Prasad M.N.

National conference on Tribal languages and museums held



MYSURU

The two-day National Conference on Tribal Languages and Museums was a success, said Dr. Ashok D.R., Director of the Department of Welfare of Scheduled Tribes.

Speaking at the valedictory session of the conference held here on Wednesday, Dr. Ashok said the conference provided a valuable platform for discussions on tribal languages, communities and museums. As many as 52 representatives from 23 States participated in the conference. The deliberations would serve as a roadmap for tribal research institutions to undertake studies and research related to tribal communities and their cultural heritage.

He said museums have an important role in preserving the cultural memories and identity of tribal communities and in documenting their contribution to the freedom movement. The conference also focused on effective representation of tribal freedom fighters and their struggles in museums, planning and conceptualisation of museum projects, adoption of contemporary exhibition techniques, and the challenges faced by tribal research institutions in establishing and maintaining museums.

H.S. Giriamba, Deputy Director of the Karnataka State Tribal Research Institute, expressed gratitude to all those who contributed to the success of the two-day national conference.

"Gayatri japa, anushthana help one lead a successful and righteous life"

MYSURU

The Hale Nadu Sosale Karnataka Brahmin Sangha organised a collective Rig Veda Upakarma at its premises in K.N. Agrahara, K.R. Mohalla in Mysuru on Wednesday.

As part of the observance, members of the Brahmin community changed their sacred threads (Yajnopavita/Janivara) and performed Sandhyavandana, Gayatri Japa and Homa under the guidance of Vidwan Suhas Bharadwaj.

Former MUDA Chairman H.V. Rajeev, who extended his greetings to members of the community on the occasion of Upakarma, said the Gayatri Mantra is one of the most powerful mantras and has the ability to enhance one's radiance and intellect and purify the mind. "Born from Lord Suryanarayana, the sacred Gayatri Mantra is immensely powerful. It conveys the profound message of seeking radiance, the blossoming of intellectual abilities and purification of the mind, while also carrying the universal message of welfare and well-being for all," he said.

Explaining the significance of the Swastika symbol,

Rajeev said its horizontal and vertical lines represent adherence to Dharma and the pursuit of Brahma Jnana, respectively, and symbolise the aspiration to rise to greater spiritual heights.

He further said that experiencing the sunrise every day with awareness and devotion itself makes the moment auspicious and sacred. Regular observance of Gayatri Japa and related spiritual practices, he added, helps inculcate good values and culture, guiding individuals towards a successful and righteous life.

Hale Nadu Sosale Karnataka Brahmin Sangha President T. Satish, vice-president Om Prakash, secretary R. Mahesh Kumar, treasurer Nagaraj, joint secretary Shankar Narayan, directors Jayashree Shivaramu, Sumathi Murali Krishna, Sudarshan and Govind Rao, manager Praveen Kumar, office-bearers and members of the Sangha were present.



Eid Milad celebration promotes Hindu-Muslim communal harmony

MYSURU

The Mayura Kannada Yuva-kara Balaga organised a programme to mark Eid Milad, highlighting communal harmony and peaceful coexistence, at the Chamundeshwari Guest House in Mysuru on Wednesday.

As part of the programme, members of the Hindu and Muslim communities came together to plant different varieties of saplings, spreading the message of environmental conservation. They later exchanged sweets and celebrated the festival in a spirit of friendship and brotherhood.

On the occasion, members of the Hindu community extended Eid Milad greetings to their Muslim brethren and emphasised the importance of communal harmony, peaceful

coexistence and national unity. Leaders, youth and members of the public from both communities participated in the programme and conveyed a strong message of communal harmony and unity to society.

KPCC members Nazarbad Nataraj, G. Raghavendra and Uttanahalli Shivanna, Kana-ka Patina Cooperative Society directors Ravichandra, Dinesh, S.N. Rajesh and Yatindra were present. Among the Muslim community leaders who attended were Arif Pasha, Congress Minority President of the Chamundeshwari Assembly constituency, along with Gulshan Pasha, Shahid, Mohammed Wasim, Mohammed Yunis, Mohammed Jannid, Par-kan, Altaf, Afroze, Shabash and others.

GAJAPAYANA BEGINS

Nine jumbos set out to herald Mysuru Dasara-2026

MYSURU

The majestic march towards the world-famous Mysuru Dasara began on Wednesday with the ceremonial launch of Gajapayana, marking the arrival of the Dasara elephant troop from the forest camps.

At Veeranahosahalli, the gateway to the Nagarahole Tiger Reserve, nine elephants belonging to the first batch were given a traditional send-off and began their journey towards Mysuru.

The ceremonial puja was performed between 10 a.m. and 10.28 a.m. during the auspicious Tula Lagna. Urban Development and Mysuru District Minister Dr. Yathindra Siddaramaiah, along with senior Forest Department officials, offered prayers and performed floral offerings to the elephants, officially flagging off the Gajapayana.

The first batch comprises Dhananjaya, Mahendra, Ekalavya, Prashantha, Gopi, Srirama, Srikanta and female elephants Lakshmi and Kaveri.

Following the ceremony, the nine elephants were loaded onto trucks and began their journey to Mysuru. The elephant troop will stay at the Forest Bhavan in Mysuru for two days before entering the Mysuru Palace premises on August 28.

Prayers for a hurdle-free Dasara

The elephants, revered as embodiments of Lord Ganesha, received a special traditional puja seeking prosper-



ABHIMANYU'S RETURN UNDECIDED

Elephant Abhimanyu, who had participated in the Dasara procession for the past 25 years and carried the Golden Howdah six times, was given a traditional farewell on Wednesday.

The Minister said no decision had yet been taken on whether Abhimanyu would be brought back for Dasara this year. "A decision will be taken after assessing the possibilities. The elephant that will carry the Golden Howdah has also not yet been finalised. It will be decided after the elephant troop undergoes training," he said.

Emotional farewell to Abhimanyu

Abhimanyu, popularly

known as the "Comb-ing King", was given an emotional farewell during the Gajapayana. Having completed 60 years of age, the elephant has been retired after participating in the Dasara festivities for 25 years and carrying the Golden Howdah six times during the Jamboo Savari.

During the Gajapayana, elephants from both sides were lined up as Abhimanyu passed through, while flowers were showered on him as a mark of respect. Abhimanyu raised his trunk in a gesture of farewell, while his mahout Vasanth saluted and expressed his gratitude to the gathering. Abhimanyu earned the title "Comb-ing

King" for his successful participation in operations to capture wild elephants and other wild animals in several States across the country.

Deputy Conservator of Forests Prabhugowda said nine elephants had been brought in the first batch for this year's Gajapayana. Considering Abhimanyu's long service, he was given a farewell on the day of the Gajapayana itself in accordance with the Government's orders. No decision has been taken yet on bringing Abhimanyu to Dasara this year. We will follow the Government's orders," he said.

He added that there was a

court order prohibiting the use of elephants that have completed 60 years of age and that the order would be followed. "The elephant troop will be given a ceremonial puja at the Forest Bhavan in Mysuru at 8.45 a.m. on August 28, following which the elephants will be taken to the Mysuru Palace," the DCF said.

Meanwhile, Srikanta was brought in the first batch of the Gajapayana in place of Sugreeva. Srikanta, who was originally scheduled to arrive in the second batch, reached in the first batch, while Sugreeva, who was to be part of the first batch, will now arrive with the second batch.

KAMBALA CERTAIN

Kambala, the traditional buffalo race, will be held as part of this year's Mysuru Dasara celebrations, and the event will be conducted at the site already identified for it, said Dr. Yathindra. The Kambala event was being organised this year following the direction of Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar. "Kambala will be held at the site that has already been identified," he said.

duct of the Dasara festivities.

Emotional farewell to 'Captain' Abhimanyu

The ceremony also carried an emotional moment as the Forest Department bid farewell to Abhimanyu, the veteran elephant who has car-

ried the Golden Howdah six times during the Jamboo Savari. After serving the Dasara festivities for 25 years, Abhimanyu has now retired. Forest officials offered floral tributes and conducted a traditional farewell ceremony for the iconic elephant, who has become synonymous with the grandeur of Mysuru Dasara.

Abhimanyu's return yet to be decided

Dr Yathindra said no final decision had been taken on bringing Abhimanyu back to Dasara. "Abhimanyu has been an integral part of Dasara for 25 years and has carried the Golden Howdah six times. As he has retired this year, he was offered prayers and given a traditional farewell. A final decision has not yet been taken on bringing him to Dasara as the Nishane (ceremonial) elephant. We will examine the possibilities and take a decision accordingly," he said.

HAPPY ONAM FESTIVAL...



MYSURU

Aaina Restaurant, Vijayanagar 2nd stage organised Onam Sadhya in Mysuru on Wednesday. Pookalam (Flower decoration) was done by the staff. Proprietors Leeljo Joseph , Krishna Reddy ,Smt Deepthi Devaiya & Swaroop Urs , Dr T.A. Abraham , Leelamma Abraham , Mr Basil Joshy , Smt Manju , Dr Anil Thomas , Dr Bindu A Thomas are seen. More than 600 guest enjoyed a 28 course traditional delicious Onam Sadhya.



Onam Festival at the Shanthaveri Gopalagowda Hospital in Mysuru. The hospital staff organized the festival in a grand scale. Students, doctors and para-medical staff actively participated in the festival.

Onam celebrated at the institution for the special kids

MYSURU

Thiru Onam festival was celebrated at the Institute of Mother and Deaf Child run by Parents Association of Deaf children in Mysuru on Wednesday. The importance of the festival was explained to children and mothers. Function was attended by vice president of the association Girish secretary, Bhaskar Shetty treasurer, Dinakar Shetty and commit-



tee members, Mallikarjun, Hariappa Naik, Om Prakash, Prabhakariah Mrs Ratna Shetty, Jalaja Govindappa

along with staff members of the school Paramala Murthy, Uma R Goudar, Vijaya, Reeta Shetty, Ashwini, Kavitha,

Ashwini Patil, Saroja, Raghuvveer and Shashidhar Shetty, mothers and children.

Lingambudi Park entry fee plan sparks citizen anger



MYSURU

A proposal by the Forest Department to impose entry fees on daily users of the historic Lingambudi Kere Vrukshodyana has triggered strong resentment among citizens, who have questioned the very rationale behind charging people to use a public recreational space developed with government funds.

The Forest Department has reportedly cited a shortage of grants for maintaining the 50-acre Vrukshodyana developed in the Lingambudi forest area and has proposed introducing daily and monthly passes for visitors.

According to the proposal, the department is considering a daily fee of Rs.10 for adults and Rs.5 for children, while monthly passes could cost Rs.250 for adults and Rs.100 for children.

The move came to light on Wednesday when regular users of the park noticed the notice regarding the proposed fee structure. In protest, citizens staged a snap demonstration, questioning why they should be made to pay for accessing a facility created from public money.

The Lingambudi Tank has a special place in Mysuru's history. Built during the reign of Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar for the welfare of citizens, the historic tank originally spread

across nearly 250 acres, though large portions have reportedly been encroached upon over the years. The tank and its surroundings continue to be a major green lung of the city, attracting hundreds of walkers, joggers and nature lovers every day.

Citizens have pointed out that the Forest Department itself developed the park using funds provided by the State Government. If maintenance grants are inadequate, they argue, the government should strengthen the budgetary allocation rather than shift the burden onto citizens who have been using the public facility for years.

Similar move

The proposal has also revived memories of a similar controversy involving Kukkarahalli Tank. During the tenure of former Vice-Chancellor Prof. N.Rangappa, the University of Mysore, which controls the tank, had reportedly proposed collecting fees from users of the facility. The proposal was eventually shelved following strong opposition from citizens.

The Lingambudi fee proposal, therefore, raises a larger question: Should citizens be charged for accessing every public green space simply because government agencies face a shortage of maintenance funds?

'OUR PARKS ARE NOT FOR SALE' Mysuru residents rally against proposed amendment

MYSURU

Residents of Kuvempunagar on Wednesday voiced strong opposition to the proposed amendment to the Karnataka Government Parks (Preservation) Act, 1975, which, according to the Mysuru Grahakara Parishat (MGP), would permit up to five per cent of park and garden land to be diverted for public infrastructure and utility projects.

The issue was discussed at an interaction held at Lava-Kusha Park in Kuvempunagar on Wednesday, where MGP representatives, senior citizens and local residents deliberated on the need to protect the city's parks and green spaces.

MGP member Suma Shenoy and convenor D.V. Dayanand Sagar, along with senior citizens and residents, participated in the interaction. MGP Founding President Bhamy V. Shenoy appealed to the residents to raise their voice against the proposed amendment and safeguard the city's parks as a matter of public right and environmen-

tal protection. Responding to the appeal, residents of Kuvempunagar announced that they would participate in the proposed protest on Sunday and raise their voice against the government's move.

Aug 30 stir

The MGP has planned a large-scale silent protest on August 30 under the slogan "Our Parks Are Not for Sale". The protest will be held at Cheluvamba Park at 8 a.m., seeking to convey citizens' opposition to the proposed amendment and the reported provision to permit diversion of five per cent of park land. The organisation has urged Mysuru residents to participate in large numbers and send a strong message that the city's parks and gardens must be preserved for present and future generations.

Retired officials Hemachandra, Jayaram, Veeranna, Sridhar, Venkatesh, Hemalatha, Naveen Kumar and advocate Prabhakar were among those present at Wednesday's interaction.



Quick Read

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind launches State Seerat campaign

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Jamaat-e-Islami Hind Karnataka has officially launched an eleven-day state-wide 'Seerat Abhiyan' from August 26th to spread the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. State Secretary Muhammad Kunhi announced that the campaign will run until September 6th, featuring seminars, public meetings, and social service programs. Organizers also released new books, including works by Yogesh Master and A.S. Puttige, during a press event in the city.

Speeding truck kills 2-wheeler rider instantly

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
A tragic accident occurred this morning near the Electronic City toll, claiming the life of a 45-year-old daily wage earner. The victim, Babuji Mia from Bihar, was riding his bike from Uttarahalli to Sarjapur for work. A speeding truck hit his vehicle, causing him to fall directly onto the road. The rear wheel of the heavy vehicle ran over his head, killing him instantly. The driver abandoned the truck and fled the scene. Traffic police have registered a case against him, and the body was moved to a hospital.

Airport security catches passenger smuggling hidden gold

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Central Industrial Security Force personnel at the city airport intercepted a passenger from Dubai trying to smuggle gold inside his mouth. The traveler, Mohd Siraj, arrived on an early flight and attempted to pass security before a domestic connection to Ghaziabad. Security officers grew suspicious when he failed to respond properly during screening at Terminal One. A physical check revealed two yellow metal capsules weighing 82 grams hidden inside his mouth. Officials handed the suspect over to local police for interrogation and further legal action.

Karnataka fights water crisis with science & law

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Karnataka is turning to both the legal system and science to tackle its growing water crisis. The state government has officially announced plans to challenge the recent Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) directive in the Supreme Court next week. The contested order mandates that Karnataka release 9,000 cusecs of Cauvery water downstream to neighboring

‘Clean up or shut down’, 15-Day restaurant hygiene deadline

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Following alarming health inspection findings across major cities, the Food Safety and Drug Administration Department has issued a comprehensive statewide advisory. All hotels, restaurants, elite five-star dining establishments, and food manufacturing industries across Karnataka have been given a strict 15-day deadline to upgrade their hygiene standards and fully comply with state regulations. The government stepped in after recent special inspection campaigns in Bengaluru, Mysore, and Mangaluru uncovered widespread lapses, including expired ingredients, unhygienic storage, and poor sanitation. The newly released advisory outlines sixteen mandatory guidelines designed to safeguard public health and restore consumer confidence in the hospitality sector. Key directives mandate that every food business operator must maintain valid FSSAI



Your kitchen must be spotless, your food must be fresh, and your license must be valid or expect heavy legal penalties.

- Food Safety and Drug Administration Department Authorities

licenses or registrations, source raw materials exclusively from verified vendors, and check manufacturing and expiration dates rigorously. Kitchens must discard spoiled items immediately and maintain pristine conditions, repairing damaged walls, tiles, and ceilings to prevent pest

infestations. Furthermore, establishments are instructed to implement strict pest control, keep proper temperature logs for frozen goods, separate raw vegetarian and non-vegetarian produce, and ensure staff members maintain high standards of personal hygiene, proper uniforms, and mandatory health check-ups. The Commissioner of the Food Safety and Drug Administration Department warned that special inspection teams will launch follow-up raids once the 15-day window closes. Any estab-

The 15-day checklist for food businesses

Valid Registration
Every food business must hold an active FSSAI license.

Pure Quality
Zero tolerance for expired, spoiled, or unsafe ingredients.

Smart Storage
Buy from trusted sources and store items at correct temperatures.

Spotless Kitchens
Floors, walls, and equipment must stay clean, dry, and repaired.

Strict Hygiene
Staff must wear clean clothes, practice good health habits, and get proper training.

lishment found failing to meet these standards will face severe legal penalties under the Food Safety and Standards Act of 2006. Authorities urge all business owners to treat this advisory with utmost seriousness to avoid prosecution or business closure.

Food safety officials raid top Bengaluru clubs

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Food Safety and Drug Control Department has raided 10 prominent city clubs, including the Century Club and KSCA, uncovering severe hygiene violations and issuing official notices. Joint inspection teams discovered blocked drains, pest infestations, cockroaches in freezers, and expired mushrooms across multiple kitchens. Authorities also found banned plastics, missing medical certificates for staff, and improper mixing of vegetarian and non-vegetarian food items. Officials collected water and oil samples for laboratory testing. Management must fix these critical deficiencies promptly, or face strict legal action under food safety regulations.



Siddaramaiah confirmed pushing for me: Parameshwar

Deputy Chief Minister Dr. G. Parameshwar confirmed former CM Siddaramaiah's candid revelations about internal party lobbying, reigniting intense debates over Karnataka's leadership succession.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka's political landscape is abuzz with intense discussion following a candid revelation by former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah regarding the state's high-stakes leadership appointments. Deputy Chief Minister Dr. G. Parameshwar has officially verified these claims, confirming that Siddaramaiah played an instrumental role in securing his current ministerial position during crucial internal party deliberations. The political stir began when a video recording surfaced from a public symposium on internal reservations held at Gandhi Bhavan in Bengaluru. While addressing attendees and reflecting on his administration's developmental initiatives for the Scheduled Caste (SC) community, Siddaramaiah was confronted by audience members regarding past discussions surrounding a Dalit Chief Minister. Visibly emotional and candid about high-level party dynamics, Siddaramaiah disclosed how the high command initially considered creating multiple deputy chief ministerial positions. According to Siddaramaiah's public disclosure, he

Siddaramaiah told the high command that there should be only one DCM post and that it should be given to me. He discussed this with me back then, so his statement is entirely true.

—Dr. G. Parameshwar, Deputy CM

strongly lobbied the party high command to restrict the role to a single individual, successfully advocating for Dr. G. Parameshwar to occupy the singular Deputy Chief Minister seat. Furthermore, Siddaramaiah revealed that during earlier political transitions, he had personally urged leadership to elevate Parameshwar to the office of Chief Minister, though party high command ultimately pursued a different direction. Responding to the viral video and subsequent media inquiries, Dr. G. Parameshwar addressed reporters in Bengaluru to clarify the situation. He stated that while he was not privy to every closed-door deliberation occurring directly between national leaders, Siddaramaiah had privately communicated these exact efforts to him. This unexpected window into the inner workings of the ruling party has reignited intense debates concerning internal power dynamics, caste representation, and leadership succession strategies across Karnataka. Political analysts note that such open acknowledgments of high-command bargaining could significantly influence upcoming political alignments and community expectations as the state administration navigates complex internal dynamics.

No compensation, no clearance: Court warns

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has firmly ruled that not a single tree can be cut or brick removed until fair compensation is officially decided, offering major relief to local agriculturists. A single-member bench led by Justice R. Nataraj is currently hearing petitions filed by local farmers, including Girijamma from Hosur village, who are fiercely challenging the land acquisition process for the long-delayed Greater Bangalore Integrated Township, commonly known as the Bidadi Township project. During the proceedings, the petitioners' legal counsel voiced deep apprehension,

arguing that the government might hastily finalize land acquisition and mobilize workforces overnight to cut down thousands of trees and evict rural families. Consequently, the farmers urged the judiciary to grant an immediate interim stay on all development activities tied to the massive urban expansion project. Addressing these pressing concerns, Justice Nataraj reassured the courtroom that the state government cannot bypass legal protocols or violate prior commitments. The bench noted that the administration has consistently promised to protect landowners' rights. Advocate General K. Shashikaran Shetty formally assured the court

that the government remains fully committed to its previous statements. He confirmed that no farmer will be forcibly displaced, and no land will be taken over until formal compensation packages are legally settled. Furthermore, the Advocate General promised that the High Court will be officially updated before any further steps are executed. The legal battle stems from a massive 7,481-acre land acquisition plan across ten villages designed to build the integrated township. Farmers contend that the project has stagnated the region's growth for two decades since its initial 2006 proposal, leaving thousands in limbo.

Toxic beauty: State raids target counterfeit cosmetics

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

In an aggressive expansion of public health safety measures, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Karnataka Drugs Control Department have launched a sweeping statewide offensive targeting manufacturers and distributors of counterfeit, substandard, and adulterated cosmetic products. Recent intelligence-led operations involved synchronized surprise raids across more than fifty locations, with intensive enforcement activity centered heavily throughout commercial hubs in Bengaluru, including Chikkapet, Malleshwaram, and Jayanagar. Regulatory teams targeted wholesale markets and local retail outlets known for distributing popular beauty items

at heavily discounted prices under unauthorized or imitation brand names. During these operations, enforcement officers seized extensive batches of consumer goods, collecting detailed samples of widely used personal care items ranging from daily wear lipsticks and moisturizing lotions to fairness creams, facial serums, and chemical-heavy hair dyes. Preliminary laboratory analysis of the confiscated inventory has revealed alarming public health hazards. Several low-cost lipstick variants and skin-lightening formulas particularly those marketed under rapid glow promises were found to contain highly toxic heavy metals, including excessive concentrations of lead and inorganic mercury.

KPSC strong room CCTV footage mysteriously deleted

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The ongoing investigation into the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) Veterinary Officer Recruitment scam has taken an alarming turn following a major investigative raid. Authorities inspecting the central office uncovered that 6 full months of vital Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) footage from the high-security strong room had been entirely wiped out, raising immediate suspicions of a massive internal cover-up. According to strict operational guidelines, the strong room designated for securely housing sensitive question papers and confidential OMR response sheets must remain under continuous round-the-

The investigation is widening rapidly as authorities summon top officials and examine digital evidence to uncover the masterminds behind the breach.

-Investigative Officials

clock digital surveillance. State regulations mandate that these digital records must be preserved securely until the entire recruitment and examination lifecycle concludes. However, investigators discovered that the surveillance hard drives were systematically stripped of data. Furthermore, the specialized hard disk used for scanning candidate OMR sheets has mysteriously vanished entirely, pointing toward deliberate tampering and institutional corruption at the highest levels of the com-

KPSC DATA WIPEOUT

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROBE

Missing Evidence: 6 months of strong room CCTV data and the OMR scanning hard disk are gone.

High-Level Scrutiny: The CID has issued notices to 55 key individuals, including former KPSC members and top officials.

Massive Crackdown: Notices are out for 329 candidates who cleared the exam, while examination center DVRs have been seized for forensic testing.

Expanding Raids: Federal agencies and state investigators are aggressively tracing financial trails and cash-for-job networks.

mission. This startling revelation strongly corroborates earlier allegations of widespread examination malpractice, including pre-exam question paper leaks and subsequent OMR sheet tampering. In response to these grave findings, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has dramatically escalated its probe. Official legal notices have been dispatched to 55 key individuals, including former KPSC President Shivashankarappa, commission member Shanta

Hosamani, and several administrative officers and staff. Additionally, legal notices have been issued to IAS officer Gyanendra Kumar, whose office and residential premises were served notices after he reportedly fled the city. Investigators have also targeted the beneficiaries of the compromised examination, issuing notices to all 329 candidates who initially cleared the test while recording daily testimonies from selected examinees. Specialized Forensic Science

What Happens Next?

The Crime Investigation Department (CID) is rapidly tightening the net. Investigators are recording daily statements from shortlisted candidates and probing how confidential records were compromised. With digital evidence deliberately wiped out, forensic experts are working overtime to recover clues and expose those behind the massive fraud.

Laboratory (FSL) teams are currently analyzing seized Digital Video Recorders (DVRs) from multiple examination centers as authorities vow to dismantle the deep-rooted corruption network.

Wild animal menace: MLA seeks fencing, quick compensation

WILD ANIMAL MOVEMENT, INCLUDING BOARS, DEER, BLACKBUCK, AND MONKEYS, HAS RECENTLY INCREASED IN THESE AREAS

CH NEWS, BIDAR

Bidar South MLA Dr Shailendra Beldale has urged Forest Minister Ramalinga Reddy to take immediate steps to control the increasing movement of wild animals in villages across the constituency and ensure speedy compensation for farmers whose crops and livestock have been damaged.

The MLA submitted a memorandum to the Forest Minister during his visit to Bidar. He said several stretches of the Amalapur-Mannalli road and the road from the entrance of Bellur village towards Kamthana pass through dense forest areas. The movement of wild boars, deer, blackbuck, monkeys and other wild animals has increased in these areas in recent days.

Beldale said the Forest Department to construct strong and suitable wire fencing on both sides of forest stretches along the Amalapur-Mannalli and Bellur-Kamthana roads.

The MLA also asked forest officials to conduct field in-



spection and identify locations where animal movement is frequent. Regular patrolling, warning systems and other preventive measures should be introduced to ensure public safety and smooth traffic movement. Proper fencing, he said, would help prevent wild animals from entering roads while also supporting their protection.

Beldale further pointed out that wild animals have been entering agricultural fields in several villages of Bidar South, damaging standing

crops and causing financial losses to farmers. Livestock have also reportedly been affected, creating concern among rural communities.

He urged the Forest Department to speed up the process of assessing damage and release government compensation to farmers and livestock owners who have already suffered losses. The MLA stressed that the issue should be treated as a priority in the interest of both farmers and the public.

Humnabad MLA Siddu Pa-

“The situation becomes particularly dangerous at night when wild animals suddenly cross the roads. This has created fear among motorists and local residents and increased the risk of accidents.”

- Dr Shailendra Beldale, MLA

Bidar MLA urges action on wildlife menace

MLA Beldale has directed forest officials to install fencing, boost patrolling, and identify animal movement zones to protect motorists and prevent wildlife from entering Bidar South roads.

He also urged swift compensation for crop and livestock losses.

til, Bidar Mandal president Gurunath Rajgire, Suresh Mashetti, Chandrayya Swamy, Sanjukumar Koli, Santosh Reddy and others were present.

Ramalinga Reddy takes dig at BJP Padayatra

CH NEWS, BIDAR

Karnataka Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy on Wednesday took a sarcastic swipe at the BJP's proposed padayatra, saying that walking would also help improve the health of those participating in it.

Reacting to the BJP's planned foot march, Reddy said the party leaders and workers could benefit physically from walking. His remarks came amid political activity surrounding the proposed padayatra and growing exchanges between the ruling Congress and the BJP.

The minister's comments were seen as a criticism of the BJP's political programme, which the opposition party is using to highlight issues concerning the state government. Reddy, however, dismissed the political significance of the march and made a reference to its possible health benefits.



The minister's comments criticized the BJP's political programme, which highlights state government issues.

The BJP and Congress have frequently traded accusations over various state and public issues, with leaders from both parties using rallies, protests and padayatras to mobilise supporters and put pressure on their opponents.

Reddy's remarks are likely to add another political dimension to the ongoing confrontation between the two parties. BJP leaders have been preparing their organisational activities and public programmes across Karnataka, while Congress leaders have defended the state government's decisions and policies.

The minister said walking is generally beneficial for health, turning the BJP's proposed political programme into an opportunity for a sarcastic comment. His statement has drawn attention as political parties intensify their activities in the state.

The BJP has yet to respond in detail to Reddy's remarks. The exchange reflects the continuing political rivalry between the ruling Congress and opposition BJP, with both sides seeking to strengthen their support base through public programmes and campaigns.

Quick Read

Study Abroad programme to be held on September 6

CH NEWS, Mangaluru
The Karnataka Vocational Education Development Corporation, under the state Department of Skill Development, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood, will organise a "Study Abroad-2026" programme in Bengaluru on September 6. The event will be held from 9:30 am at Gayatri Vihar, Palace Grounds, near Gayatri Grand, Gate No. 4. More than 75 universities from over 10 countries are expected to participate in the programme. The event aims to provide students with information on overseas higher education opportunities, admission procedures, student visa requirements and scholarship options under one platform. Eligible students interested in participating can register by September 5 through the official website mentioned in the department's notification. For more information, students can contact 080-29522222. The District Skill Development Officer has urged interested candidates to make use of the opportunity.

Loan assistance scheme applications invited in Udupi

CH NEWS, Udupi
The Karnataka Minorities Development Corporation has invited online applications for loan assistance schemes for eligible minority community members in the state. The schemes cover activities including silk reeling enterprises, overseas education loans, self-employment, business activities, direct loans, Santwana scheme, Sikh community economic empowerment and Ganga Kalyana schemes. Applications can be submitted online through the corporation's website. Eligible applicants aged between 18 and 55 years can apply with the required documents. The last date for submitting applications is September 17. For more information, applicants can contact the District Manager's office of the Karnataka Minorities Development Corporation at Maulana Azad Bhavan, Alevoor Road, Shivalli village, Manipal. They may also contact the district and taluk minority information centres in Udupi, Karkala and Kundapura.

Hampi area sees crackdown on unauthorised homestays

CH NEWS, VIJAYANAGARA

Authorities have launched a surprise operation against unauthorised homestays operating in the Hampi heritage area, taking action to regulate accommodation facilities in and around the UNESCO World Heritage site.

Officials conducted inspections at homestays suspected of operating without the required permissions and registrations. The action was aimed at identifying establishments functioning in violation of tourism and other regulatory norms.

Hampi attracts a large number of domestic and international tourists throughout the year. With the growth in tourism, the number of private accommodation facilities in villages surrounding the heritage zone has also increased. Officials have been monitoring such establishments to ensure that tourism-related activities comply with applicable rules.

During the operation, officials reportedly checked documents and registration details of accommodation facilities. Establishments found operating without necessary approvals were warned and action was initiated as per the rules. Authorities have indicated that inspections will continue in the Hampi region.

The crackdown is also intended to ensure the safety and convenience of tourists visiting the historic site. Officials are expected to verify whether accommodation providers are meeting prescribed standards relating to registration, safety and other requirements.

Hampi is one of Karnataka's major tourist destina-

Hampi crackdown on homestays

Strict Checks: Officials inspect documents and registrations of private accommodations near Hampi.

Rule Enforcement: Unauthorised establishments face warnings and legal action under regulations.

Tourist Safety: The ongoing drive aims to ensure visitor security and service standards.

Future Action: Authorities plan to intensify monitoring across the heritage zone.

tions and is known for its historic monuments, temples, stone structures and archaeological remains. The heritage zone receives visitors from across India and abroad, making regulation of tourism-related commercial activities particularly important.

Officials have reportedly urged owners of homestays and other accommodation facilities to obtain the necessary permissions before conducting business. Those continuing to operate without required approvals could face action under relevant regulations.

The surprise inspections have sent a message to operators that unauthorised commercial accommodation will not be allowed to function unchecked in the heritage region. Authorities are expected to intensify monitoring in the coming days to identify other establishments that may be operating without valid documents.

The operation comes as part of efforts to maintain orderly tourism development in the Hampi area while protecting the interests of visitors and preserving the heritage character of the region.

Marigold crop brings hope amid drought

CH NEWS, BAGALKOT

Amid inadequate monsoon rains and growing drought concerns, a farmer in Bagalkot district has demonstrated how alternative crops and efficient water management can help sustain farm income. Govindappa Balaganavar of Kishori village in Mudhol taluk has cultivated marigold on about 2.5 acres despite limited water availability. By carefully managing available water, he has raised a healthy crop, with the field now covered in bright yellow flowers. The harvested flowers are being supplied to markets, where marigold enjoys steady demand. Balaganavar expects an income of around Rs 50,000 to Rs 90,000 per acre, depending on market prices and production. His initiative highlights the importance of choosing suitable crops, efficient irrigation and market-oriented farming during difficult weather conditions.

MLA Srinivas Mane distributes materials to govt schools

CH NEWS, HANGAL

MLA Srinivas Mane distributed various educational and essential materials worth Rs 2.34 lakh to the Government Higher Primary Girls' School and Government Higher Primary Boys' School in Belgolpet village of the taluk under his 50%-50% initiative.

The programme aims to improve basic infrastructure and facilities in government schools with contributions from the MLA and the community. As part of the initiative, various materials required by students and schools were provided to the two institutions.

Speaking on the occasion,

Block Congress president Basanagouda Patil said MLA Srinivas Mane has been extending support to government schools through the 50%-50% programme without depending solely on government grants. He said the initiative has attracted attention across the state and is helping schools provide better facilities and quality education to students.

According to programme organisers, more than 135 government schools have so far benefited from the initiative, with facilities worth around Rs 4 crore provided. The materials distributed under the programme include laptops, speakers, plastic chairs, office storage units, library glass cup-

boards, fans, smart LED TVs, whiteboards and computer tables, among other essential items.

The initiative is intended to address infrastructure and facility requirements in government schools and create a better learning environment for children. Support from individuals and the community is being used along with the MLA's contribution to meet the needs identified by schools.

Speaking at the programme, Basanagouda Patil appreciated the efforts of the MLA and said improving facilities in government schools would encourage more children to access quality education. He noted that providing basic equipment and

learning resources could significantly improve the functioning of schools.

Several local leaders and community representatives participated in the programme. They included Shivashankaraya Hiremath, Prashanth Kadapanavar, Krishna Urankar, Ravi Byalal, Niranjan Hiremath, Zaheer Sunkad, Nissimappa Madiwalal, Mallikarjun Hosamani, Rakesh Eeligar, V.K. Korahalli, Suresh Kammar and Raju Gundur, among others.

The organisers said the 50%-50% initiative would continue to support government schools by identifying their specific requirements and providing necessary facilities.



celebrated in the coastal region for generations and has significant cultural as well as religious importance. Special prayers and novenas are held for several days leading up to the festival, while churches conduct various religious programmes on September 8.

The delegation pointed out that the state government has in recent years treated the occasion as a restricted holiday, with the benefit largely limited to teachers. They argued that the festival is celebrated widely across the coastal districts and should therefore be recognised with a public holiday.

The representatives requested that the government de-

clare September 8 a public holiday across Karnataka. If a statewide holiday is not possible, they sought a public holiday specifically for Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts, where the festival is celebrated on a large scale.

Catholic Sabha Mangaluru president Santosh D'Souza, political convener Stany Lobo, Udupi president Melvin Aranha Shirva, Udupi zone president Kiran Lewis and other members were part of the delegation.

The community has expressed hope that the government will consider the request and issue a favourable decision before the festival.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE EXAMINED

5 RARE JAIN INSCRIPTIONS FOUND AT MALA KOTE BASADI

CH NEWS, KARKALA

Five rare Jain inscriptions have been discovered at the historic Mala Kote Basadi in Karkala taluk, providing potentially valuable evidence for the study of Jain heritage and the cultural history of coastal Karnataka.

Researcher Shrutesh Acharya identified the inscriptions during a study of the basadi. He examined the inscriptions and documented details relating to their script, language and historical significance. Further research is expected to establish their exact period and provide a clearer understanding of the information recorded in them.

Karkala has long been an important centre of Jainism and is known for its basadis, Jain monuments and historical sites. The region has a rich Jain heritage, with inscriptions and architectural remains providing evidence of the influence of Jain communities and rulers over several centuries.

The newly discovered inscriptions at Mala Kote Basadi could offer insights into the religious practices, social life and patronage associated with Jain institutions in the region. Researchers are expected to study the text and other features of the inscriptions in greater detail before drawing conclusions about their historical importance.



The discovery is significant because inscriptions are important primary sources for reconstructing the history of a region. Apart from religious information, they can contain details about donations, administration, local communities, patrons and the development of religious in-

stitutions.

Karnataka has a rich tradition of Jain inscriptions, particularly in regions such as Karkala and Shravanabelagola. Several inscriptions found in these areas have helped historians understand the growth of Jainism and the evolution of Kannada

Jain inscriptions found in Karkala

- **Historic Discovery:** New inscriptions have been uncovered at Mala Kote Basadi in Karkala.
- **Research Value:** Experts will study the text to understand ancient Jain practices and social life.
- **Primary Sources:** Such findings help historians reconstruct regional administration and community history.
- **Cultural Legacy:** The find adds to Karnataka's rich heritage of Jain monuments and inscriptions.

language and culture.

The five inscriptions found at Mala Kote Basadi therefore add to the growing body of historical evidence from Karkala. Scholars and heritage experts have stressed the importance of scientifically documenting and preserving such inscriptions so

that their contents can be studied by future generations.

The discovery by Shrutesh Acharya is expected to encourage further research into the history of Mala Kote Basadi and the wider Jain heritage of Karkala and coastal Karnataka.

India should become world's top silk producer

THIS CENTRE FULFILLS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SILK FARMERS ACROSS CHITRADURGA, BALLARI, AND DAVANAGERE DISTRICTS.

CH NEWS, CHITRADURGA

India should strive to overtake China and become the world's leading silk producer through greater technological research, innovation and the hard work of farmers and scientists, MP Govinda M. Karajola said.

Speaking after inaugurating an interaction between silk farmers and scientists under the "Nanna Reshme Nanna Hemme" campaign, organised jointly by the Central Silk Board and the Department of Sericulture, Karajola said China currently leads global silk production while India ranks second. Karnataka, he noted, is the leading silk-producing State in the country.

He said the Sericulture Research Extension Centre at Maragatta in Chitradurga taluk, which began functioning in 1982, had been upgraded as a Regional Sericulture Research Centre. The centre



serves the requirements of silk farmers in Chitradurga, Ballari and Davanagere districts. The regional centre was shifted from Kodathi near Sarjapur in Bengaluru to Maragatta and upgraded to strengthen research activities.

He stressed that agriculture remains the foundation of the economy and urged farmers not to sell agricultural land for real estate development. He said farmers should focus on improving productivity

“The centre would coordinate technical activities of 10 sub-units and three research extension centres in northern Karnataka located at Ranebennur, Koppal and Bidar. Two southern Karnataka units at Maddur and Madiwala will also come under its jurisdiction, along with four extension centres in Maharashtra and one in Madhya Pradesh.

- Govinda M.Karajola, MP

and contributing to food security for the country's large population.

Karajola also highlighted various Central government schemes benefiting farmers. He said 1,42,767 farmers in Chitradurga district had received Rs 713.72 crore directly under the PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme. Under the crop insurance scheme, farmers had received Rs 722 crore in compensation for crop losses.

He said 17,306 agricultural machines worth Rs 47.72

Farming welfare in Chitradurga

- Central schemes have significantly aided Chitradurga farmers.
- PM-Kisan provided Rs 713.72 crore to 1,42,767 beneficiaries.
- Crop insurance delivered Rs 722 crore in loss compensation.
- Thousands gained machinery, drip irrigation, and Mudra loans.

crore had been distributed and 53,301 drip irrigation units had been provided with Rs 94 crore in assistance. More than 2.65 lakh people had received loans under the PM Mudra scheme, while around 180 silk farmers received equipment during 2025-26.

Hundreds of BJP, Congress workers join JDS

Other political figures joining him include former Bajrang Dal convener Tudukooru Manju and Youth Congress vice-president Manju



CH NEWS, CHIKKAMAGALURU

In a significant political development in Chikkamagaluru district, more than 200 active workers from the BJP and Congress are set to join the Janata Dal (Secular) in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

The mass induction involves party leaders and workers from Chikkamagaluru and Mudigere taluks. The move is expected to strengthen the JDS organisation in the Malnad region and create a fresh challenge for both the BJP and Congress ahead of future political contests.

The defection is being led by Vijay Kumar, a prominent BJP leader who had sought the party ticket during the 2023 Assembly elections. Several other political figures are expected to join him, including former Bajrang Dal district convener Tudukooru Manju and Youth Congress district vice-president Manju.

Key office-bearers of the BJP Yuva Morcha mandal and

more than 200 active workers associated with both the BJP and Congress are also expected to join the regional party. The development has generated considerable interest among political circles in Chikkamagaluru and Mudigere.

The formal joining ceremony will be held at the JDS central office in Bengaluru. Former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, JDS youth leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy and Legislative Council member S.L. Bhojgowda are expected to be present. The new entrants will formally join the party by accepting the JDS shawl in the presence of senior leaders.

Hundreds of workers from Chikkamagaluru are expected to travel to Bengaluru to participate in the programme. The sudden movement of leaders and workers from

JDS WELCOMES DEFECTORS

- BJP leader Vijay Kumar leads a multi-party defection to JDS.
- Figures from BJP, Congress, and Bajrang Dal join the party.
- Over 200 workers shift allegiance in Chikkamagaluru and Mudigere.
- Ceremony takes place in Bengaluru under senior JDS leaders.

both the BJP and Congress camps has created a buzz in Malnad politics.

JDS workers have welcomed the development, viewing the induction of leaders and grassroots workers as an opportunity to expand the party's organisational network in the region. The move could also influence local political equations in Chikkamagaluru and Mudigere in the coming months.

Quick Read

Mangaluru court sentences man for acid attack

CH NEWS, Mangaluru

A court in Mangaluru has sentenced a man to 10 years in prison for carrying out an acid attack on his sister-in-law. The court found him guilty following the trial and investigation into the case. The investigation was conducted by police officers, including Kusumadhara, who was serving as the Police Inspector of the Puttur Women's Police Station at the time. The accused was convicted based on evidence presented before the court.

The sentence marks the conclusion of legal proceedings in the case, in which the woman suffered injuries in the acid attack. The court imposed the 10-year prison term on the accused after considering the circumstances and evidence placed before it. Police officials involved in the investigation were also acknowledged during the proceedings.

MP Chowta seeks CM's support for Mangaluru rail network

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

Dakshina Kannada MP Captain Brijesh Chowta has written to Former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah seeking the Karnataka government's support for including the Mangaluru railway network under the Mysuru division.

Chowta urged the State government to back the proposal and work with the Railway authorities to ensure that the administrative reorganisation benefits passengers and strengthens railway infrastructure in the coastal region.

Chowta also sought the Chief Minister's intervention to facilitate discussions with the Railway Ministry and other concerned authorities. He said coordinated efforts between the State government, elected representatives and railway officials would be important to secure better infrastructure and services for the region.

Mangaluru has long been a key transport and commercial



“Bringing the Mangaluru railway network under the Mysuru division could help address several long-standing demands related to railway development. The need for improved connectivity, faster execution of pending projects and better passenger amenities in Mangaluru and neighbouring areas.

- Brijesh Chowta, Dakshina Kannada MP Captain

centre on the Karnataka coast. Improved railway administration and infrastructure are expected to support the movement of passengers and goods and strengthen connectivity between coastal Karnataka and other parts of the State. The MP's appeal comes

amid renewed discussions over the administrative structure of railway operations in the region. Railway users and local organisations have also been seeking faster implementation of projects and adequate budgetary support for Mangaluru's railway infrastructure.

Chowta expressed hope that the State government would extend its support to the proposal and take up the matter with the Centre. He said a coordinated approach would help ensure that Mangaluru receives the railway infrastructure required to meet the region's growing passenger and economic needs.

CM covering up Minister Nagendra's corruption

CH NEWS. SHIVAMOGGA

The previous Siddaramaiah government accepted the resignation of Minister Nagendra, who is the main accused in the Rs 187 crore Valmiki Corporation scam, but Chief Minister DK Shivakumar is covering up the corruption by anointing Nagendra, the mastermind of the scam, MLA SN Channabasappa said.

Speaking at a press conference at his office on Wednesday, he said that Chief Minister DK Shivakumar had promised to form a corruption-free government at the beginning of the first session after assuming office as the Chief Minister. But now he is acting contrary to the promise made by standing behind accused Minister Nagendra, saying that the government does not have money to alleviate the drought in the state. Discussions on serious issues like drought in the state should not be held in the session held earlier. He alleged that the entire session was taken up for the Nagendra case, fearing that if there was a discussion, funds would have to be given for drought relief, and he made the Nagendra case the pretext.

The Congress government is running on the death of Chandrashekhar, an officer who committed suicide by writing a death note against the Valmiki Corporation scam. Although there was to

be a discussion on serious issues like KPSC, Valmiki, Bidadi, the session was ended two days early due to the struggle of BJP allies. Do the Congress state and national leaders who speak against us have any morals? Are they giving the key to the corrupt minister, he asked bitterly.

The government has been answering only 50 percent of the questions we have asked in the last three years. The government does not have the strength to answer even the simplest questions asked by the MLAs. Out of 400 questions asked, the government has been answering only 125. Even after 3 months since the schools started, shoes and socks have not been supplied to children. The priests are paying the electricity bills of C, D class temples. Even though they are being added to the household lights, the government is not answering. There is also no answer about the investigation into the Kuvempu University scam. There is a pension problem for 23.24 lakh people in the state. Only one month's pension has been released in 6 months. The government should clarify when the remaining 5 months' pension will be released, he demanded.

BJP city President Mohan Reddy, leaders S Gnaneshwar, Deendayal, Manjunath Navale Srinag, DS Shivakumar, Yoshodha, Latha Srinivas, Prakash Vaddinakoppa, Somesh were present.



Mangaluru SWR integration must boost rail development

CH NEWS, MANGALURU

The integration of Mangaluru's railway region with South Western Railway (SWR) should be used to accelerate railway development in coastal Karnataka, the Kanyakumari District Railway Users' Association (KKDRUA) has said. Congratulating Dakshina Kannada MP Captain Brijesh Chowta, the association said the Railway Board's decision should spur new projects, faster execution of stalled works and adequate budgetary support.

It urged SWR and elected representatives to prepare a development plan focusing on pending projects, improved connectivity and timely completion of sanctioned works. The KKDRUA also called for an audit of passenger amenities at Mangaluru Central and Mangaluru Junction stations to identify infrastructure gaps and plan improvements. It said the integration should address long-standing demands by strengthening connectivity, modernising passenger facilities and improving existing railway infrastructure.

Kinnal Eid Milad procession spreads harmony message

CH NEWS, KOPPAL

Eid Milad-un-Nabi was celebrated with religious fervour and enthusiasm in Kinnal village of Koppal taluk, with a colourful procession conveying a message of communal harmony, brotherhood and national unity.

The procession, organised to mark the birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammed, began in the morning from Ahle Sunni

Jamia Masjid. A specially decorated open vehicle featuring models of Mecca and Medina was among the major attractions. Green flags, religious chants and the participation of children added to the festive atmosphere as the procession moved through the village.

The procession passed through several prominent circles and memorials in the village. At Sri Basaveshwara Circle, participants paid floral

tribute to the statue of Basaveshwara. They later offered respects at the statue of Dr B.R. Ambedkar at Ambedkar Circle.

The procession then proceeded through Sri Siddarameshwara Circle, Sri Hazrat Tipu Sultan Circle and Sri Bhagat Singh Circle, where participants paid floral tributes to the respective statues. The organisers said the gesture was intended to convey the values

of equality, mutual respect and national integration.

The procession later passed through the Hazrat Raja Baga-sawar (Yamanurappa) Dargah route and reached Sri Kanakadasa Circle, where a floral tribute was offered to the statue of Kanakadasa. Participants said honouring personalities from different social and cultural backgrounds reflected the village's spirit of coexistence and harmony.

PUBLIC CRITICISM FOLLOWS

Haveri MLA Prakash Koliwad fined ₹500

CH NEWS, HAVERI

Ranebennur Congress MLA Prakash Koliwad was fined Rs 500 by traffic police for allegedly riding a motorcycle without wearing a helmet, following criticism after photographs and a video of the incident surfaced on social media.

Koliwad was reportedly riding a Bullet motorcycle without a helmet on August 25. The photographs and video showing the MLA without protective headgear went viral on social media, drawing criticism from members of the public.

Several users questioned whether traffic rules applied equally to elected representatives, pointing out that ordinary motorists are fined for riding without helmets. Following the public reaction, Ranebennur traffic police issued a notice to the MLA over the violation.

A fine notice of Rs 500 was



subsequently delivered to Koliwad's residence. The MLA paid the penalty after receiving the police notice and later shared details of the payment on his Facebook account.

Koliwad said the police had performed their duty and that he respected their action. He said the Superintendent of Police had issued the notice to him and that he respected the officer for carrying out her responsibilities without making any distinction.

The incident has once again highlighted the importance of traffic discipline among all road users, including elected representatives. Wearing a helmet while riding a two-wheeler is a mandatory safety requirement, and violations can result in penalties.

The action against the MLA has also drawn attention to the need for consistent enforcement of traffic rules. Officials and citizens have repeatedly urged motorists to

MLA fined for helmet rule violation

Faced with public outrage over unequal enforcement, Ranebennur police fined MLA Koliwad Rs 500 for riding a two-wheeler without a helmet. The MLA promptly paid the penalty, praised the officers for treating everyone equally, and reaffirmed that traffic laws apply to all citizens.

follow safety regulations to reduce the risk of serious injuries and accidents on roads.

The fine paid by Koliwad following the police notice has sent a message that elected representatives are also subject to traffic regulations. The incident has renewed calls for motorists across Haveri district to follow helmet and other road safety rules.



- PRADIVYA NAMBIAR

QUANTUM HEALING: WHEN SCIENCE MEETS THE NEW WELLNESS FRONTIER

Quantum” is another word that has travelled an unexpected distance. Once associated mainly with laboratories, complex equations and the strange behaviour of matter at the smallest scales, it is now becoming part of a new language of wellness. Quantum healing. Quantum energy. Frequency technologies. Resonance. Wearable devices. Even jewellery and everyday wellness products inspired by ideas of energy and vibration. It is a fascinating shift: concepts that once belonged almost entirely to physics are now being explored in the context of the human body and well-being. Quantum physics has transformed our understanding of matter, energy and the physical world. At the same time, modern biology continues to reveal just how dynamic and interconnected the human body is. Our cells communicate, respond to their environment and depend on finely balanced electrical, chemical and energetic processes. Perhaps this is why the language of frequency and resonance is finding such a natural place in today’s wellness conversation. We already live in an environment filled with electromagnetic activity. We use mobile phones, WiFi, Bluetooth devices and countless other technologies every day. The human body is not isolated from its physical environment; it constantly interacts with light, heat, electrical activity, chemical signals and electromagnetic fields. The emerging wellness conversation asks whether there are other ways of understanding these interactions and whether technologies designed around frequency, resonance or other forms of energy could eventually play a meaningful role in supporting well-being. Some of these technologies are already being explored through physiological measures such as heart-rate variability, brain activity and other biological responses. Early research in different areas has reported measurable changes, opening interesting questions about how energy, frequency and biological systems may interact. There is still much to understand. What are the mechanisms involved? Which effects are meaningful? How reproducible are the findings? And how might future research translate these discoveries into practical applications? These are not reasons to close the door on the possibilities. They are reasons to keep exploring. Science has repeatedly expanded the boundaries of what we thought was possible. Ideas that once seemed abstract have become technologies that are now part of everyday life. Quantum physics itself began as a radical new way of looking at nature and has since transformed modern technology, from electronics and lasers to medical imaging and communications. Perhaps quantum wellness represents another stage in that continuing conversation between science, technology and human well-being. The challenge and perhaps the opportunity lies in understanding how far these principles can meaningfully extend into the world of human wellness. The important thing is to remain curious as the field develops to explore new ideas, encourage good research and remain open to what future discoveries may reveal. The quantum world reminds us that nature is often stranger, richer and more interconnected than our everyday experience suggests. And perhaps that is what makes the new conversation around quantum wellness so compelling. We are still learning how much there is to discover.

BRIDGING THE GAP IN URBAN WATER GOVERNANCE

As rapid urban expansion accelerates across major Indian metropolises, cities confront a growing crisis in water security. Dwindling groundwater reserves, severe seasonal monsoonal shortfalls, and outdated inter-state water distribution models continually jeopardize access to safe drinking water for millions. The current administrative approach remains predominantly reactive relying heavily on emergency cusec allocations, legal mandates, and costly, energy-intensive infrastructure. To build long-term climate resilience, urban authorities must transition from crisis management to sustainable hydrological planning. Modernizing water governance requires immediate structural shifts across key policy areas:

Dynamic Allocation Frameworks: Static water-sharing quotas calibrated to historical averages fail during prolonged severe droughts. State regulatory bodies must establish transparent, binding protocols that dynamically adjust allocations based on real-time monsoon metrics and environmental inflows.

Decentralized Purification Technologies: High-efficiency, low-cost filtration models such as bio-based filtration systems offer scalable solutions to purify urban supplies and treat industrial contaminants without straining municipal energy grids.

Mandatory Conservation & Recycling: Urban planning guidelines should mandate greywater recycling, strict rainwater harvesting mandates, and systematic groundwater recharge across all commercial and residential developments.

Hydrological Intelligence: Satellite monitoring, IoT sensors, and predictive data modeling are essential tools for accurately tracking basin capacities, enabling proactive infrastructure management.

Securing urban water futures requires moving past fragmented legal disputes and short-term measures. By integrating scientific innovation, adaptive water-sharing mechanisms, and community-level conservation strategies, policymakers can establish a sustainable framework that guarantees clean water access for growing populations while protecting vital natural river ecosystems. Furthermore, urban water security cannot be achieved without addressing equitable distribution and financial sustainability.

Municipal authorities must implement transparent, volumetric water pricing tariffs that discourage excessive industrial and commercial waste while protecting low-income households. Integrating nature-based solutions such as restoring urban wetlands, protecting natural floodplains, and rejuvenating degraded lakes will naturally boost groundwater retention and mitigate urban flooding risks. Finally, fostering robust public-private partnerships will accelerate the adoption of smart metering technology, allowing cities to detect pipeline leaks instantly and minimize non-revenue water loss.

- ALLAN AUGUSTINE

KPSC MUST BE FREED FROM POLITICAL INFLUENCE



- SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM

The Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC), entrusted with the vital responsibility of selecting candidates for various government departments, is facing a serious crisis of credibility. Allegations of question paper leaks, favouritism, nepotism, irregularities and other malpractices have repeatedly raised questions about the functioning of an institution that is expected to uphold the highest standards of fairness and integrity.

The KPSC is not merely another government agency. For thousands of young people in Karnataka, it represents a gateway to a secure and respectable career in public service. Every recruitment notification creates hope among lakhs of aspirants who spend years preparing for competitive examinations. When examinations are delayed, selection lists are cancelled or recruitment processes are questioned because of alleged irregularities, it is the honest candidates who suffer the most. The fundamental problem is the growing perception that the KPSC is not sufficiently insulated from political influence. Governments may change, but concerns over interference in the functioning of recruitment bodies have persisted. If members are perceived to owe their positions to political patronage, questions will naturally arise about their independence while making crucial recruitment decisions. A recruitment commission must be above political considerations. Its primary obligation should be to the Constitution, the law and the principles of merit and equality not to the political establishment of the day.

It is a responsibility to Karnataka's youth and to the future of public administration

The consequences of a flawed recruitment process are far-reaching. Every year of delay can cost an aspirant an opportunity because of the age limit. A candidate who has prepared honestly for several years may suddenly find himself or herself ineligible because an examination has been postponed or a recruitment process has been cancelled. Such candidates cannot simply recover the lost years. Repeated controversies also create a dangerous perception that merit alone may not be sufficient to secure a government job. If young people begin to believe that money, influence or political connections matter more than ability and hard work, faith in the entire system will erode.

Political parties, unfortunately, often respond to KPSC controversies in a predictable manner. The Opposition attacks the government whenever irregularities are reported, while those in power defend the process or accuse the Opposition of politicising the issue. When governments change, the positions often change too. What remains missing is a sustained, bipartisan effort to reform the institution.

The KPSC requires structural reforms rather than temporary political firefighting. The first step should be to ensure a transparent and credible process for appointing members of the Commission. The government should consider a system in which the selection of members is based primarily on competence, integrity, administrative experience and professional credentials, rather than political affiliation or proximity. The

Chairman, in particular, must be chosen after a thorough assessment of his or her track record and suitability for the position. A broader selection mechanism involving the government and Opposition could help build public confidence in these appointments. If all major political parties agree on the process, the credibility of the Commission would receive a significant boost.

ing appropriate legal protection to genuine reforms undertaken to strengthen the independence and efficiency of the Commission. Courts must remain the ultimate safeguard for candidates whose rights are affected by arbitrary or illegal decisions. The ruling party and the Opposition must therefore rise above partisan politics on this issue. Instead of trading accusations every time a recruitment controversy



Secondly, the KPSC needs stronger institutional safeguards against political interference. Its functioning, examination systems, question-paper security, evaluation procedures and publication of results must be governed by clearly defined protocols that leave little room for manipulation.

Thirdly, technology must be used to strengthen examination security and transparency. Confidentiality of question papers, digital monitoring, secure evaluation systems and time-bound publication of results can reduce opportunities for malpractice. At the same time, accountability must be fixed whenever negligence or misconduct occurs.

The judiciary, too, can play a constructive role by provid-

emerges, elected representatives should speak in one voice for institutional reform.

Karnataka's youth deserve nothing less than a recruitment system in which merit is supreme, rules are predictable and every candidate is treated equally. The KPSC can regain its credibility, but that will happen only when political considerations are kept at a safe distance from recruitment. The objective should not merely be to save the KPSC from the latest controversy. It should be to rebuild an institution that inspires confidence among every aspirant. Restoring the independence, integrity and credibility of the KPSC is not a political favour; it is a responsibility to Karnataka's youth and to the future of public administration.

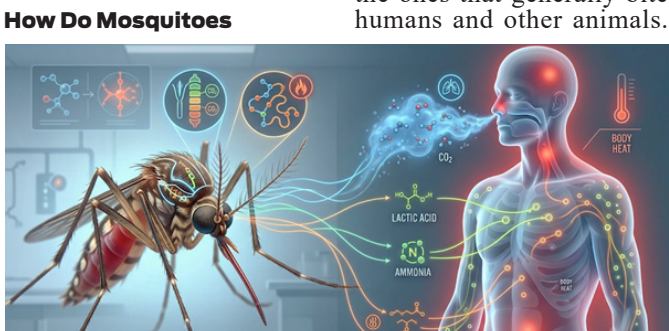
THE SECRET BEHIND MOSQUITOES' ATTRACTION TO HUMANS

Mosquitoes are among the most familiar insects in our surroundings, yet their ability to find humans is remarkably sophisticated. In a room with several people, mosquitoes may seem to prefer certain individuals over others. This raises an interesting scientific question: What makes some people more attractive to mosquitoes?

Scientists have discovered that mosquitoes use a combination of signals to locate humans. These include carbon dioxide, body heat, moisture and chemical odors released by the skin. When we breathe, we release carbon dioxide. Mosquitoes can detect changes in carbon dioxide in the air and use this information as an important clue that a potential host is nearby. But carbon dioxide is only the beginning of the process. As mosquitoes come closer, they use additional signals to identify a suitable target. Human skin releases hundreds of chemical compounds, and the combination of these compounds can differ from person to person. Sweat, skin chemistry and the microorganisms living naturally on the skin can all contribute to a person's distinctive odor profile. This helps explain why some people appear to attract more mosquitoes than others. It is not simply a matter of having “sweet blood.” Rather, mosquitoes respond to a complex mixture of chemical and physical signals.

How Do Mosquitoes Find Us?

Mosquitoes have specialized sensory systems that allow them to detect chemical cues in their surroundings. Their ability to sense carbon dioxide helps them identify the general direction of a potential host. Once they get closer, odors from human skin become increasingly important. Body heat and moisture provide additional clues. A mosquito approaching a person can use these signals to locate exposed skin. This remarkable combination of



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senses allows the insect to navigate toward a host even when the person is not immediately visible.

Why Do Female Mosquitoes Bite?

An important biological fact is that female mosquitoes are the ones that generally bite humans and other animals.



- Dr. Vijay Garg

Mosquito Attraction

Every person's skin has a unique chemical environment. Sweat contains various substances, while naturally occurring microorganisms on the skin can transform some compounds into others. The resulting mixture contributes to a person's body odor. Scientists are studying how these chemical signals influence mosquito behavior. Some compounds may attract mosquitoes, while others may make a person less appealing to them. Research in this area could eventually help scientists develop more effective mosquito repellents and traps by targeting the insects' sensory systems.

Why Does This Research Matter?

The study of mosquito attraction is not merely an interesting question in biology. It has major implications for public health.

Mosquitoes can transmit diseases such as malaria, dengue, chikungunya, yellow fever and several other infections. Understanding how mosquitoes locate humans could help researchers develop better strategies for reducing mosquito bites and limiting disease transmission.

Retired Principal, Educational Columnist and Eminent Educationist, Street Kour Chand, MHR, Malout, Punjab

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Harnessing Quantum Health Safely

Quantum wellness promises an exciting bridge between cutting-edge physics and personal vitality, yet it demands cautious navigation. While non-invasive therapies tapping into body energy offer compelling holistic benefits, the market is increasingly flooded with untested claims. True innovation requires rigorous scientific validation, clear regulatory standards, and transparent clinical trials. Without proper oversight, enthusiasm risks turning into exploitation. Medical authorities and researchers must collaborate to separate legitimate quantum health breakthroughs from clever marketing, ensuring public safety while embracing genuine wellness advancements.

- Shreyas Prakash

Depoliticize Public Service Commissions

Constitutional bodies like the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) must remain untainted by political interference to function effectively. When merit takes a backseat to political patronage, public trust in governance collapses, leaving thousands of hardworking aspirants disillusioned. Systemic reforms such as transparent appointment protocols for commission members, independent oversight, and strict time-bound recruitment cycles are urgently needed. Restoring autonomy to the KPSC is essential to ensuring fair recruitment, safeguarding youth futures, and rebuilding integrity in public administration.

- Veronica A.

Decoding Mosquito Attraction Signal

Understanding why mosquitoes target certain individuals is a vital public health milestone. Recent research highlighting carbon dioxide plumes, body heat, and specific skin microbiota scent signatures reveals that attraction is driven purely by chemical signaling rather than luck. Decoding these biological triggers enables scientists to design highly targeted, eco-friendly repellents and smart traps instead of relying on broad chemical sprays. Translating these scientific insights into accessible consumer products will significantly reduce vector-borne disease transmission in vulnerable communities worldwide.

- Paul Judah

HONOURING DOMESTIC LABOUR: A STEP TOWARDS THE DIGNITY OF MOTHERHOOD

Behind every successful family lies an invisible force that often goes unnoticed domestic labour. Preparing meals, raising children, caring for elderly family members, maintaining the household, managing daily routines, and providing emotional support are tasks that demand time, energy, patience, and skill. Yet, these responsibilities are frequently regarded as natural duties rather than valuable work. As a result, millions of women, who perform the bulk of domestic labour, continue to receive little recognition for their immense contribution to families, society, and the economy.

The time has come to change this perspective. Honouring domestic labour is not merely about appreciating household chores; it is about recognising the dignity, commitment, and invaluable role of women in building strong families and a stronger nation.

For generations, domestic work has been considered an extension of a woman's traditional role. Cooking, cleaning, washing, caring for children, and looking after elderly parents have rarely been viewed as productive economic activities, despite the fact that these responsibilities consume several hours every day. Unlike paid employment, domestic work has no salary, no promotions, no retirement benefits, and often no holidays. Yet its value is immeasurable.

A household functions efficiently because someone dedicates time and effort to its smooth operation.

Without this unseen labour, families would struggle to balance education, employment, health, and emotional well-being. Every professional who succeeds outside the home depends, directly or indirectly, on the care and organisation provided within it. Domestic labour, therefore, is not just family work it is a foundation of economic productivity and national development.

Women in India shoulder a disproportionately large share of household responsibilities. Even when employed outside the home, many continue to perform most domestic duties after returning from work. This "double burden" often leaves them physically exhausted and mentally stressed. Despite increasing female participation in education and the workforce, the unequal distribution of household work remains one of the greatest barriers to gender equality.

The issue extends beyond economics. Domestic labour involves emotional intelligence, time management, caregiving, budgeting, conflict resolution, nutrition planning, and child development. Managing a household requires organisational abilities comparable to those demanded in many professional occupations. Yet these skills are rarely acknowledged as expertise.

One of the biggest challenges is the invisibility of domestic labour. Because it takes place within the home and is unpaid, it is often absent from national economic statistics. Economists across the world



have increasingly argued that unpaid care and household work make a significant contribution to society and should be recognised in discussions about economic development and public policy. While assigning a precise monetary value to domestic work may be difficult, acknowledging its importance is essential.

Recognising domestic labour does not necessarily mean placing a salary on every household task. Respect can take many meaningful forms. Families can share household responsibilities more equally. Husbands and children can actively participate in cooking, cleaning, and caregiving. Decisions within the family should reflect mutual respect rather than traditional assumptions about gender roles. Appreciation expressed through simple words of gratitude can also make a profound difference.

Education has a crucial role to play in transforming attitudes.

Schools should teach children that household responsibilities belong to every family member, regardless of gender. Boys and girls alike should learn essential life skills such as cooking, cleaning, organising, and caring for others. Such education nurtures empathy, responsibility, and equality from an early age.

Technology can also reduce the burden of domestic labour. Modern household appliances, digital services, and smart home technologies save time and physical effort. However, technology alone cannot eliminate inequality. True change requires a shift in mindset where domestic responsibilities are viewed as shared responsibilities rather than exclusively women's work.

Governments and policymakers also have an important role. Investments in childcare facilities, maternal healthcare, social security, flexible work arrangements, and support for caregivers can significantly

improve the lives of women. Policies that acknowledge unpaid care work help create a more inclusive economy and strengthen family welfare.

Equally important is changing societal attitudes. Homemakers should never be seen as financially dependent individuals with limited contribution. Their work creates healthy families, nurtures future generations, and enables economic activity across society. Their contribution deserves recognition, appreciation, and respect.

Domestic labour also has a profound emotional dimension. Mothers often serve as the emotional anchors of families, offering encouragement during difficult times, celebrating achievements, resolving conflicts, and creating an atmosphere of love and security. This emotional labour cannot be measured in financial terms, yet it is among the most valuable contributions to human development.

The media, educational institutions, and community organisations should actively highlight the importance of domestic labour. Celebrating homemakers, sharing stories of caregiving, and encouraging shared family responsibilities can gradually reshape public attitudes. A society that values caregiving is ultimately a society that values humanity.

As gender roles continue to evolve, men too must become equal partners in managing households. Shared domestic responsibilities strengthen relationships, reduce stress, improve work-life balance,

and create healthier environments for children. Equality within the home often becomes the foundation for equality in the workplace and society.

Honouring domestic labour is ultimately about recognising human dignity. Every meal prepared, every child comforted, every elderly parent cared for, and every home maintained contributes to the well-being of society. These acts may not generate financial income, but they generate something equally valuable—healthy families, responsible citizens, and a compassionate nation.

A progressive society is not measured solely by its economic growth or technological advancement. It is also judged by how it respects those whose contributions often remain unseen. By recognising domestic labour as meaningful work, we affirm the dignity of motherhood, promote gender equality, and strengthen the moral foundation of society.

The journey towards a more just and equitable world begins at home. When domestic labour is respected, women are empowered, families become stronger, children grow up with values of equality and compassion, and society moves closer to true progress. Honouring domestic labour is therefore not merely an act of gratitude it is a vital step towards justice, dignity, and sustainable development.

-DR. VIJAY GARG

SCHOOLING OR OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE?

A school is far more than a physical arrangement of brick walls, blackboards, and desks. It is a vital, living institution where the future of society is systematically forged. Within these spaces, children develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, and morally. Consequently, ensuring security, enforcing discipline, and maintaining a peaceful environment is not an administrative burden—it is a foundational prerequisite for high-quality education. Recent directives issued by Deputy Commissioner Rahul Narwal in Hansi district, which restrict unauthorized entry into government schools, highlight a critical truth: educational institutions must remain focused spaces of learning, shielded from unnecessary intrusion and security risks.

In rural and semi-urban landscapes, government schools often serve as central public landmarks. However, public importance must never be confused with unrestricted public access. While the surrounding community naturally encompasses the school, the institution's primary daily commitment is to the well-being and academic growth of its students. Allowing individuals to wander into classrooms, interrupt teachers during instruction, or air personal grievances creates severe operational friction. Unauthorized access disrupts student concentration, compromise administrative authority, and derails the educational process. During examinations or institutional events, such interruptions can cause lasting harm to academic integrity.

Furthermore, school security in the modern era is a complex, multifaceted responsibility. Access control is not simply about keeping order; it is about protecting vulnerable children and staff, safeguarding sensitive records, securing digital infrastructure, and preventing untoward incidents. Whether involving adults or youth, unsanctioned entry poses unacceptable risks. Implementing robust protocols—such as maintaining detailed visitor registers, verifying entry motives, and requiring prior administrative approval—is vital for institutional safety.

Importantly, the measures initiated by the Hansi administration do not aim to isolate schools from the broader public. Instead, they seek to establish structured, purposeful engagement. Parents, education officers, and inspection teams should always be welcomed, provided their visits serve a legitimate purpose and follow established procedures. Constructive communication between parents and educators is crucial for student development, but it must be conducted without interrupting active instruction. By scheduling fixed appointment windows and utilizing formal visitor logs, schools can address parental concerns respectfully and confidentially while keeping the academic routine intact.

Another critical challenge is the undue influ-

ence exerted by local figures. Educational environments must remain free from political, social, or personal pressure. Attempts to resolve private disputes on school grounds, intimidate teaching staff, or manipulate administrative decisions severely undermine institutional dignity and morale. Educators can only deliver effective instruction when they operate free from intimidation. Protecting school grounds from external interference is therefore essential to preserving educational quality and autonomy.

Translating policy into practice requires pragmatic, scalable mechanisms rather than reliance on heavy-handed mandates. Schools must maintain systematic visitor registries that document the identity and purpose of every visitor. Meetings with staff or students should occur only with administrative knowledge and under monitored conditions. Where resources allow, larger institutions might deploy dedicated security personnel, establish single-point entry system, or install surveillance equipment.

At the same time, policy implementation must avoid transforming schools into unwel-



coming or overly restrictive fortresses. Schools are inherently spaces built on trust, openness, and community connection. A rigid, one-size-fits-all approach risks alienating parents and distancing the local community. The true administrative challenge lies in striking an optimal balance between accessibility and security. School principals and headmasters occupy the center of this balance. As custodians of the educational environment, they require direct structural and administrative support to enforce these guidelines effectively, particularly in understaffed or resource-constrained rural facilities.

Ultimately, every child possesses a fundamental right to a safe, uninterrupted, and peaceful learning environment. Parents must have full confidence that their children are safe throughout the school day. The directives issued in Hansi district offer a clear path forward: they seek not to sever community ties, but to uphold the primary purpose of education. A school's doors should remain open to those with valid reasons to enter, yet firm, clear boundaries must be enforced to keep unnecessary disruptions outside. Protecting this boundary is essential to safeguarding the sanctity of education.

-DR. PRIYANKA SAURABH

INDIA'S SPACE REVOLUTION: PRIVATE ENTERPRISE FUELS A NEW SCIENTIFIC POWER

India's space journey is no longer restricted to state laboratories and specialized research institutions. Today, it has evolved into a dynamic convergence of scientific innovation, youthful entrepreneurship, private capital, and international ambition. The strategic decision to unlock the space sector to private participation under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership marks a definitive milestone in this national evolution. An arena once governed exclusively by public institutions now features hundreds of agile enterprises reshaping technological boundaries with original ideas and entrepreneurial momentum. Prime Minister Modi's direct engagement with private space entrepreneurs underscores a clear trajectory for the nation. His vision to position India as a global focal point for space talent, venture investment, and enterprise reflects the country's accelerating status on the world stage.

India's space capabilities rest upon an extraordinary historical foundation. Operating under severe resource constraints, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) cultivated a culture of scientific discipline, self-reliance, and technical precision that earned international respect. The path that started with the launch of Aryabhata steadily advanced toward interplanetary capabilities with the Mars Orbiter Mission. Subsequently, the Chandrayaan series demonstrated expanding lunar capabilities, culminating in Chandrayaan-3's historical landing near the Moon's south polar region. India thereby became the first nation to accomplish a soft landing in this uncharted lunar domain. This milestone was not merely a scientific triumph; it showcased Indian engineering confidence and the capacity to convert complex technical challenges into practical achievements. Similarly, the Mars Orbiter Mission highlighted extreme cost efficiency in deep-space operations, while Aditya-L1 expanded solar observation capabilities. The ongoing Gaganyaan program further signals India's upcoming transition into human spaceflight operations. Together, these achievements prove that India no longer merely follows global aerospace standards; it possesses the institutional capability to establish new international benchmarks.

The natural progression of this foundational success lies in expanding private-sector participation. Following comprehensive policy reforms, the rapid emergence of roughly 440 space-tech startups illustrates the scale of this structural change. Private enterprises are actively building commercial satellites, manufacturing launch vehicles, and developing advanced applications in space-based data analytics, artificial intelligence, Earth observation, telecommunications, meteorology, and space-debris tracking. Companies like



Skyroot Aerospace have executed historic private rocket launches, while Agnikul Cosmos has leveraged indigenous manufacturing techniques to design complex propulsion systems. These initiatives demonstrate that space is no longer the sole domain of government entities, but a vibrant arena for high-skilled employment, economic research, private investment, and international commercial trade.

Crucially, modern space applications extend far beyond scientific prestige; they serve as critical infrastructure for socio-economic development on Earth. Satellite-derived data directly enhances agricultural planning, crop monitoring, hydrology, forestry, marine management, and climate forecasting. During natural disasters such as floods, cyclones, and landslides, real-time satellite imaging drastically accelerates emergency response and relief coordination. Furthermore, satellite infrastructure plays an indispensable role in expanding digital connectivity across remote and rural communities. Consequently, India's space architecture acts as a primary engine for social progress, digital inclusion, and economic integration.

Prime Minister Modi's strategic framework for the sector reflects this broader utility. The ultimate goal extends beyond basic launch capability; it aims to build a dominant presence within the global space economy. The strategic intent is to attract international talent, encourage local innovation, and transform India into a trusted destination for global capital and commercial partnerships. Over the coming decades, space technology will become deeply integrated into global telecommunications, defense, logistics, energy, weather prediction, and digital economies. Nations that secure technological authority in this space will naturally enhance both their strategic leverage and economic security.

However, significant structural hurdles remain alongside these commercial opportunities. Space engineering demands intensive capital investment, lengthy development cycles, and high operational risks. Rocket propulsion failures carry severe financial consequences compared

to traditional industrial ventures. Given these strict engineering standards and capital requirements, government responsibility cannot stop at basic regulatory oversight. The state must actively facilitate innovation by granting private enterprises access to ISRO's testing facilities, facilitating technology transfers, building collaborative research frameworks, and protecting investor confidence. Specialized governance bodies like the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) provide the necessary single-window framework to streamline private operations effectively.

India's primary competitive edge lies in merging its established reputation for cost-effective engineering with private sector agility and risk tolerance. By combining ISRO's institutional experience with private enterprise, India can capture a major market share in small-satellite manufacturing, payload integration, and orbital data services. This expansion will yield significant foreign exchange earnings while generating high-value technical employment locally. Decades of institutional knowledge accumulated by ISRO serve as vital capital for emerging startups, and establishing a culture of public-private collaboration will multiply national capabilities.

Ultimately, transformed space policy aims to turn India into a global hub for space knowledge and commercial enterprise. Success will be judged not solely by mission frequency, but by how effectively space infrastructure improves conditions for farmers, researchers, industrial workers, and citizens. From the lunar surface to solar observation, India has built a strong record of achievement. The next phase requires linking scientific curiosity with market execution, state policy with commercial drive, and domestic talent with international markets. This integrated approach aligns with the goals of Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) and Viksit Bharat (developed India), establishing a lasting legacy in global space exploration.

- LALIT GARGG

Quick Read

Six killed, 12 injured in Telangana bus crash

CH NEWS, Telangana
Six people, including five women, were killed and at least 12 injured when a private electric bus hit a truck near Dorakunta village in Suryapet district, Telangana, around 5:15 am on Wednesday. The bus was travelling from Hyderabad to Eluru with 42 passengers. Police said the truck was carrying heavy industrial pillars, which struck the bus after the collision. Two injured passengers were in serious condition and shifted to a hospital in Vijayawada.

Two workers killed in separate NHAI site accidents

CH NEWS, Kashmir
Two workers died in separate accidents at NHAI construction sites in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday. In Samba's Jakh, 25-year-old Gotam Sahu from Bihar was killed when a concrete structure collapsed while he was working on a bridge under the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra project. Another worker was injured. In Jammu, 45-year-old Budhi Singh from Ramban died after falling from a height near the Sidhra Tawi Bridge construction site.

Woman killed, 12 rescued in Howrah apartment fire

CH NEWS, KOLKATA
A 65-year-old woman, identified as Gopa Mukherjee, died after a fire broke out in her apartment at Andul in West Bengal's Howrah district on Wednesday afternoon. The fire started around 1 pm on the second floor of a five-storey building, police said. Five fire tenders reached the spot and controlled the blaze within an hour. At least 12 residents from other floors were rescued by locals, police and firefighters. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Speaker issues notices to 20 TMC rebels.

NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has issued notices to 20 Trinamool Congress (TMC) MPs who have joined the little-known Nationalist Citizens Party of India (NCPI). The notices seek their responses within seven days to disqualification petitions filed by the TMC.

The petitions are based on allegations that the MPs abandoned the TMC and later joined the NCPI. TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee has argued that their actions attract disqualification under the anti-defection provisions of the Constitution. The petitions are currently pending before the Speaker.

The development came after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the Supreme Court that Birla had already issued notices to the 20 MPs. Mehta was appearing for the Lok Sabha Speaker and the Secretary

DELHI WOMEN'S SCHEME

9.5 Lakh women register for Lakshmi yojana scheme

NEW DELHI

Nearly 9.5 lakh women have registered for the Delhi government's Lakshmi Yojana within a month of its launch, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said on Wednesday. The scheme provides eligible women with Rs 2,500 every month, aiming to improve their financial security and help them become more independent.

Gupta said the scheme was launched on August 1 and described the monthly assistance as a commitment made

BJP Government claims 43% manifesto promises fulfilled

West Bengal Urban Development Minister Agnimitra Paul on Wednesday said the BJP government had fulfilled 43 per cent of its election manifesto promises since May

KOLKATA

West Bengal Urban Development Minister Agnimitra Paul on Wednesday said the BJP government has fulfilled 43 per cent of the promises made in its election manifesto since taking office in May. She made the claim while speaking to reporters on the sidelines of CREDAI Kolkata Techcon 2026. Paul did not provide details of the promises that had been completed.

Paul also expressed confidence that investment in West Bengal would increase significantly. She said the government was working on development projects and expected industries to enter the state in a major way. Her comments



"Administration was focused on delivering development on the ground"

- Agnimitra Paul, Development minister

came as the government focuses on attracting fresh investments and strengthening industrial activity.

State Industry Minister Tapas Roy had earlier said the government was considering separate policies for land and industry to encourage investment. The proposed measures are expected to address issues related to industrial land and

NEET aspirant found dead inside rented flat

KOTA

A 20-year-old NEET aspirant from Madhya Pradesh was found dead at her rented flat in Rajasthan's, police said. Officials suspect that she died by suicide. Police reached the house after receiving information and took her to MBS Hospital, where doctors declared her dead. Her body was later kept in the hospital mortuary, and her family was informed.

The student was from Chhatarpur and had been staying in Kota with her younger sister while preparing for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test at a private coaching institute. The sisters had been living in Kota since 2023 and moved into the rented flat in July, according to police.

Station House Officer Devesh Bhardwaj said the younger sister had gone for coaching classes and returned later. When she found that her elder sister was not responding to repeated knocks, she sought help from other residents of the multi-storey building. Police were informed after the flat was opened and the student was found dead inside.

Police said no suicide note had been found in the room so far. Officers are examining the spot and collecting information to understand the circumstances surrounding the death. The postmortem examination will be carried out after the family reaches Kota, officials said.

Further action will be taken after the postmortem and discussions with the family, police said. Officials are continuing their inquiry to establish what happened before the student's death. The incident has once again drawn attention to the pressures faced by young people preparing for highly competitive entrance examinations. The investigation is also continuing at present.

Justice Mehta questions CJP over transfer request

NEW DELHI

Supreme Court judge Justice Sandeep Mehta has written three letters to Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, questioning why his requests to transfer Rajasthan High Court Acting Chief Justice Sanjeev Prakash Sharma have not been acted upon.

Justice Mehta referred to what he described as clear evidence of favouritism within the court.

In his first letter, dated August 2, Justice Mehta described the situation in his parent High Court in Rajasthan as "grim and disturbing".

He questioned why his repeated appeals had been ignored despite what he considered serious concerns about the functioning of the institution.

Justice Mehta also alleged that Sharma had shown conduct unbecoming of a leader of the institution on more than one occasion.

create a more favourable environment for businesses.

Roy had also said the proposed industrial policy would include steps to increase exports from the state. The government is looking to use these measures to support industrial growth and attract companies to West Bengal.

Paul said the administration was focused on delivering development on the ground. The government hopes increased industrial activity and corporate investment will contribute to economic growth and create more opportunities in the state. Further details of the claimed 43 per cent implementation of poll promises were not provided by the minister.

Fake liquor factory busted, thousands of bottles seized

BHUJ

Gujarat Police have busted a fake liquor factory in Kutch district and seized nearly 10,000 empty and filled bottles of a popular Indian-made foreign liquor (IMFL) brand. Two people have been detained following the operation at a makeshift unit in Adipur, officials said on Tuesday. The raid comes days after 13 people died in Bhavnagar district after allegedly consuming spurious liquor sold in bottles carrying the label of a well-known IMFL brand.

Police said the seized material included about 9,400 empty bottles and 600 bottles containing 180 ml of liquor each. Around 600 litres of chemicals were also recovered from the site. The two detained suspects were identified as Hitesh Bam-

Rajasthan congress gets 40,000 civic poll applications

JAIPUR

The Congress has received more than 40,000 applications for 10,245 councillor seats in 309 urban local bodies across Rajasthan, creating a busy selection exercise before the municipal elections. Party sources said the strong response has encouraged leaders, while the new QR based system has made it easier for aspirants to apply online.

State Congress spokesperson Swarnim Chaturvedi said the QR initiative has attracted young people hoping to enter local politics. The party has opened an online portal where applicants can use the code, fill in their details and seek tickets. More than half of the party's tickets are expected to go to youth candidates.

Observers are consulting ward workers and functionaries to judge each applicant's background, support and chances of winning. The process is being carried out in three phases. Afterward visits,



Uttarakhand landslides block 72 roads amid rain

MUSSOORIE

More than 72 roads across Uttarakhand were blocked by landslides and boulder falls on Wednesday as several areas received light to moderate rain. Pithoragarh, Nainital and Chamoli were the worst affected, reporting 14, 12 and 10 road closures respectively. The India Meteorological Department has issued a yellow alert, warning of thunderstorms, lightning and intense rainfall at isolated places in the state's hilly districts from August 27 to September 1.

In Uttarkashi, pilgrim movement on the Janki Chatti-Yamunotri route continued under SDRF supervision after a retaining wall collapsed near Bhangeligad. PWD teams began repairs, expected to take seven to eight days.

Three villages in Mori tehsil remained without electricity after a feeder was damaged. Officials said restoration work was underway.

Despite widespread disruptions, Uttarakhand recorded rainfall below normal levels in the 24 hours ending Wednesday morning.

KEY INSIGHTS	
10,000:	Bottles seized
9,400:	Empty bottles
600:	Filled bottles
600L:	Chemicals recovered
2:	Suspects detained
13:	Hooch tragedy deaths

aniya, a Mumbai resident, and Vijendra Jat from Mathura in Uttar Pradesh.

Inspector General of Police, Border Range, Chirag Koradiya said further action was being taken against those involved. The authorities are examining the seized bottles and chemicals as part of the investigation. Gujarat is a dry state, where the manufacture, sale and consumption of alco-

hol are prohibited.

The raid has added to the ongoing investigation into the Bhavnagar hooch tragedy. Police said 67 people had consumed the spurious liquor containing methanol, a highly toxic substance. Thirteen people died, while authorities have arrested 27 people in connection with the case so far.

The State Monitoring Cell, which investigates illegal liquor and gambling activities, is conducting a wider investigation across several states. Officials are tracing the source of methanol and other chemicals, as well as the people involved in procuring and transporting the raw materials. Further investigation and arrests are expected as police work to uncover the wider network behind the illegal liquor trade.

India rejects UN panel remarks as malicious

NEW DELHI

India on Wednesday rejected observations made by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD), describing them as "politically motivated" and "highly malicious".

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the remarks did not present a fair picture of the country. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal issued the response after the UN committee expressed concern over reports of alleged large-scale violations by law enforcement officials against several ethnic and ethno-religious communities.

The committee also referred to Indigenous and Tribal Peoples and other vulnerable groups in its observations.

The concerns included references to Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, particularly Dalits, as well as non-citizens.

Modi assures Nepal support after deadly flash floods

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday spoke with Nepal Prime Minister Balendra Shah and offered condolences following the loss of lives in devastating flash floods. Modi assured Shah that India was ready to provide all possible humanitarian assistance as rescue and relief operations continued in the Himalayan country.

The floods struck the Bhote Koshi River in Nepal's Rasuwa region, leaving at least seven people confirmed dead and hundreds missing, according to preliminary reports. The disas-



ter has also raised serious concerns about the safety of tourists and residents in the affected areas.

The Nepal Tourism Board said 384 tourists were reported missing, including 291 foreign nationals and 93 Nepali citizens. Among the foreign nationals, 105 were Indians. Tourists from the United Kingdom, Australia, the United

States, Malaysia, South Africa and the Netherlands were also reportedly missing. Officials stressed that these figures remain preliminary and are being verified.

The missing travellers were linked to nine travel agencies, while rescue teams continued searching for survivors and gathering information. Authorities were working with travel agencies and local officials to confirm identities and locate those still unaccounted for. Several tourists' nationalities also remained unconfirmed.

India and Nepal are coordinating closely as relief efforts continue.

Quick Read

Two escaped rape accused arrested in Rajasthan

CH NEWS, SRINAGAR
Two rape accused who escaped from Srinagar Central Jail were arrested in Rajasthan on Wednesday, officials said. Farman Khan and Mukhtar Guijar fled the high-security prison on August 23 after scaling its front wall. Both were facing separate cases under the POCSO Act. Police launched a major manhunt and issued wanted notices and rewards for information. Their arrests followed a tip-off from Srinagar Police. Further investigation is underway to establish how they escaped and trace any assistance they may have received during their flight.

Two labourers missing after boat accident

CH NEWS, PATNA
A boat carrying 21 labourers capsized during anti-erosion work along the Ganga in Bhagalpur's Raghapur block on Wednesday. Nineteen workers were rescued, while Sikandar Mandal and Badal Mandal remain missing. SDRF teams, police, local divers and villagers continued the search. District Magistrate Alankrita Pandey ordered action against contractors for alleged safety violations. Boat use for transporting materials has been banned, with tractors to carry geo-bags instead. Officials were directed to enforce safety rules and prevent minors from hazardous work.

Meghalaya assembly opposes uranium mining

SHILLONG

The Meghalaya Legislative Assembly on Wednesday unanimously adopted a government resolution opposing uranium mining and uranium ore-processing facilities in the state. Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma described the decision as historic, saying it reflected the collective position of the people and lawmakers against uranium-related activities.

Sangma thanked members across political parties for supporting the resolution and setting aside political differences on an issue concerning Meghalaya's people. He said opposition to uranium mining had continued for decades, with traditional institutions, civil society groups, student organisations and local communities repeatedly raising concerns about proposed activities.

The Chief Minister said the state government would send the Assembly's decision to the Centre and request that Meghalaya's concerns and the constitutional rights of tribal communities be considered. He highlighted the state's distinctive landholding system, where customary practices and Sixth Schedule protections play an important role in decisions involving land and natural resources.

The resolution covers not only uranium extraction but also the establishment of uranium ore-processing facilities anywhere in Meghalaya. Uranium deposits have been identified in areas including Domiasiat, Wakhijn and Lostoin. Communities opposing mining have raised concerns over possible environmental and health risks, involving land and natural resources.

Sinha calls for quaternary healthcare across India

SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday called for India to move beyond tertiary healthcare and expand quaternary-level treatment. Addressing the Quaternary Healthcare and Research Summit in Srinagar, Sinha said advanced medical care and research should become accessible to people across the country, including those living away from major cities. Recalling his visit to Akhnor in 2020, Sinha said doctors had highlighted the lack of modern equipment needed to diagnose rare diseases. He said the experience showed the gap between healthcare available at district hospitals

and the advanced treatment many patients require. Bridging this gap, he said, should be treated as a national priority. Sinha highlighted India's healthcare expansion, including free treatment for more than 56 crore people, annual vaccination of seven crore children and the use of e-Sanjeevani telemedicine by 37 crore people. He also noted the growth of medical infrastructure, including 23 AIIMS and 2,045 medical colleges across the country. The Lieutenant Governor said tertiary hospitals should gradually be developed into quaternary centres offering organ transplantation, robotic and precision surgery, advanced genomics, cellular

therapies and AI-supported diagnosis. He urged hospitals and research institutions to invest in specialised infrastructure and expand training in critical medical fields. Sinha also proposed stronger links between district hospitals, tertiary centres and quaternary institutions through telemedicine and artificial intelligence. He called for cooperation among Himalayan states, universities, hospitals, private institutions and innovators to promote biomedical research. Stressing the need for home-grown innovation, he said advanced healthcare must not remain limited to wealthy citizens or metropolitan areas, but should become equally available to everyone.

CJP PROTEST MARCH

AISA Backs Sep 5 CJP Delhi March

MUMBAI

The All-India Students' Association (AISA) on Wednesday extended support to the Cockroach Janta Party's proposed September 5 protest march in Delhi. The student organisation said the demonstration would seek withdrawal of FIRs registered against students and an inquiry into allegations of pellet and bullet firing during earlier protests. AISA national president Neha Bora said the concerns that had led to youth mobilisation remained unresolved. She



claimed cases against students were still pending despite an earlier government commitment to withdraw them. Bora said the continued legal proceedings had increased frustration among students and young protesters seeking action on their demands.

The proposed march is expected to focus on the treatment of students during previous demonstrations and the need for accountability over the alleged use of pellets and bullets. AISA said an independent inquiry was necessary to establish what happened during the earlier protests and determine responsibility. Bora told PTI that the government needed to address the concerns raised by students instead of allowing the cases to remain pending. She said the unresolved issues were

continuing to affect young people and had become an important reason behind renewed mobilisation. AISA's support adds to the campaign ahead of the September 5 march in the national capital. The organisation reiterated its demand for the withdrawal of student-related FIRs and a proper investigation into the alleged firing incidents. The protest is expected to bring together young people and supporters seeking answers from authorities over the handling of earlier demonstrations.

Rahul Gandhi targets Bihar govt over accountability

Rahul Gandhi accused the Bihar govt of suppressing student protests instead of addressing recruitment exam irregularities, paper leak allegations and concerns over accountability

NEW DELHI

Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday accused the Bihar government of using police action to avoid answering questions raised by students. He alleged that authorities were suppressing protests instead of addressing concerns over alleged irregularities in recruitment examinations and reported paper leaks. Gandhi said students were asking straightforward questions about the examination process and government accountability. He questioned why irregularities had alleged-



ly occurred, why action had not been taken over paper leak allegations and how long the government would continue to affect the future of young people. His remarks came amid controversy surrounding a video that showed a six-year-old boy being taken away by police

during a student protest in Patna. The incident drew attention on social media and added to criticism surrounding the handling of demonstrations by authorities. Gandhi said the government should listen to students and respond to their concerns rather than rely on police measures. He argued that young people preparing for recruitment examinations deserve a fair and transparent system, especially when their careers depend on the results. The Congress leader's comments have added to the political debate over examination irregularities and the treatment of protesters in Bihar. The allegations come at a time when concerns among students remain focused on recruitment procedures, paper leak claims and the need for accountability. The government's response to these allegations will remain important as students continue seeking clarity over their examinations and future opportunities

"Students are asking simple questions, and the government must answer them instead of using police action."
- Rahul Gandhi, LoP

Jagan targets Naidu over drought, farmer crisis

AMARAVATI

Former Andhra Pradesh chief minister and YSRCP president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Wednesday criticised the TDP-led coalition government over its response to drought conditions caused by El Nino. He said the government had failed to prepare a contingency plan despite farmers facing serious concerns over the kharif crop. Speaking at a press conference in Tadepalli, Jagan said Andhra Pradesh had recorded around 52 per cent deficient rainfall during the past two months. He alleged that Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu had not given farmers

clear assurances or announced alternative measures. Jagan also accused the government of weakening Rythu Bharose Kendras and reducing support measures, including crop insurance and e-cropping. Jagan said the government had not started distributing seeds for alternative crops or announced a clear strategy to deal with the impact of El Nino. He also alleged that Andhra Pradesh's interests were being ignored over water from Srisailem and Nagarjuna Sagar. Citing government data, he said crop insurance applications had fallen from 1.18 crore in 2022-23 to 35.17 lakh. The YSRCP chief also attacked the government over

reservations for Backward Classes in local body elections. He claimed his government had provided greater representation to BC communities and spent Rs 1.82 lakh crore through various welfare schemes. He accused Naidu of repeating an earlier political dispute over the quota as elections approach. Jagan further raised concerns over law and order, referring to the Addanki incident involving police personnel and an autorickshaw. He alleged that authorities gave conflicting accounts and attempted to hide the facts. He also claimed organised ganja sales were growing. Jagan said these issues showed the coalition government needed to act quickly on farmers' concerns and governance.

Bengal orders job cards for migrant workers' families

KOLKATA

The West Bengal government has directed all district magistrates to identify families of migrant workers for issuing Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Cards under the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act. The cards will provide eligible rural households with up to 125 days of guaranteed wage employment annually and encouraging workers to return home. The Panchayat Affairs and Rural Development Department issued a circular asking district administrations to begin and complete the identification process at the earliest. Officials said the programme is aimed at creating regular income opportunities in villages, strengthening local economies and encouraging migrant workers to return to their home districts. According to the state Labour Department, more than 22 lakh migrant workers have been identified in West Ben-



West Bengal has directed district magistrates to identify migrant workers' families for rural job cards, offering up to 125 days of guaranteed wage employment annually and encouraging workers to return home.

gal. Their details have already been shared with district administrations. Officials will now verify the information and identify the families that can benefit from the rural employment guarantee. The government has asked district magistrates to treat the exercise as a priority rather than a routine administrative task. Murshidabad has the highest number of identified migrant workers, with around four lakhs, followed by Malda

with nearly three lakh and West Midnapore with more than 1.5 lakh. The employment guarantee under the new law is mainly intended for adult members of rural households willing to undertake unskilled manual work. The state has received an assurance of central assistance for implementing the scheme, while around Rs 1.265 crore has been allocated by the state Rural Development Ministry. Officials said the initiative could provide families with a local source of income and reduce their dependence on migration for employment.

Kharge targets BJP over rising household costs



NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday criticised the Narendra Modi government over rising prices of essential commodities, saying the BJP's promise of "acheche din" had instead made it harder for ordinary families to manage their household budgets. He accused the government of failing to control food inflation and ease the financial pressure on consumers. In a post on X, Kharge said the prices of basic items had become a serious concern for common people. He argued that families were being forced to spend more on everyday needs, leaving less money available for other household expenses. According to him, the government must address the issue instead of avoiding questions about inflation. Kharge also accused the BJP of trying to escape public scrutiny through what he described as distracting stunts

and irrelevant statements. He said the Congress would continue to raise questions about the cost of living and demand answers from the government on behalf of ordinary citizens. The Congress president said inflation directly affects families because food and other essential goods form a major part of monthly spending. He maintained that people could not be expected to ignore the continued pressure on their household finances while political debates focused on other issues. Kharge warned that voters would remember the difficulties caused by rising prices and would judge the government over its handling of inflation. His remarks added to the Congress's criticism of the Centre on economic issues, with the party continuing to demand greater accountability over the cost of essential commodities. The issue is likely to remain a major political point as concerns over household expenses continue.

Quick Read

Kohl's misses quarterly sales estimates

NEW YORK

Kohl's missed Wall Street estimates for second-quarter sales on Wednesday, as cautious consumer spending on discretionary items offset gains from the department store chain's turnaround efforts, sending its shares down about 5% before the bell. The company, however, raised its annual profit forecast after receiving \$150 million in tariff refunds during the quarter. U.S. consumer sentiment deteriorated in August, while retail sales fell for the first time in nine months, underscoring increasingly "selective" spending among middle- and lower-income households.

'Volkswagen staff cost-cutting journey 'not over'

BERLIN

Volkswagen CEO Oliver Blume urged workers at the German automaker's Emden plant, which could face closure under a sweeping turnaround plan, to step up savings efforts, warning that costs were still too high when compared with rivals. "This journey is not over. Because we not only measure ourselves against our own past performance. We measure ourselves against the best locations in Europe," Blume told staff, according to excerpts of his speech shared by the company on Wednesday.

'India-Japan trade could reach \$50 bn by 2030'

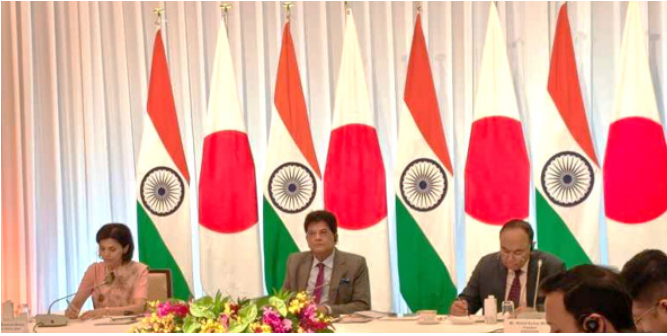
Bilateral merchandise trade has risen 33% since FY21, outpacing trade growth with the US, EU and China.

TOKYO

India and Japan could see their bilateral trade rise to \$50 billion by 2030, driven by stronger economic complementarities, expanding business engagement and cooperation in emerging technologies and supply chains, according to an ASSOCHAM report released on Wednesday.

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal released the report, titled "India-Japan @75: From Enduring Friendship to Strategic Business Partnership", during a startup roundtable in Japan. The launch was attended by ASSOCHAM Secretary General Saurabh Sanyal, President Nirmal Kumar Minda and India's Ambassador to Japan Nagma Mohamed Mallick.

ASSOCHAM said India's trade with Japan currently accounts for less than one per cent of the country's overall trade, highlighting considerable room to deepen market access and increase higher-value exports. The report said economic cooperation is also moving beyond traditional industrial sectors into semiconductors, artificial intelligence, digital technologies, critical minerals and resilient supply chains.



INDIA-JAPAN TRADE IN A NUTSHELL
Bilateral trade target: \$50 billion by 2030.
India-Japan trade remains below 1% of India's overall trade.
Focus areas include semiconductors, AI and digital technologies.
Critical minerals and resilient supply chains offer new opportunities.
India's market and workforce complement Japan's technology and capital.
Goyal holds talks with leading Japanese business groups.

India's large domestic market, young workforce and expanding manufacturing capabilities were identified as strengths that complement Japan's advanced technology, capital and industrial expertise. Improvements in ease of doing business could further accelerate investment and commercial ties, the industry body said.

The report comes as both countries seek deeper cooperation across manufacturing, technology and supply-chain sectors. Earlier, Goyal said he had discussed India's expanding opportunities in trade, mobility, industry, banking and insurance with leading Japanese business and financial institutions.

During his Japan visit, Goyal met senior executives from Toyota Tsusho, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation Group, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group and Nippon Life Insurance, according to his posts on X.

EPFO advances Kerala pension amid Onam

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has credited the August pension to 4,40,901 pensioners in Kerala on August 26, ahead of the usual month-end schedule, to help beneficiaries and their families meet financial needs during Onam.

According to an official statement issued Wednesday, the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS), 1995 pension was released early as a special arrangement for the festival. The move is intended to ensure pensioners can access funds without inconvenience during the celebrations.

The pension has been transferred directly into beneficiaries' bank accounts through EPFO's Centralized Pension Payment System (CPPS), which enables streamlined pension disbursement across the country. The organisation said the technology-enabled system is part of efforts to provide timely social security benefits and improve pension services.

CPPS: KEY BENEFITS

The Centralized Pension Payment System allows pensioners to receive payments through any bank, eliminates repeated verification at commencement, and ensures immediate credit after release. It also removes the need to transfer Pension Payment Orders when beneficiaries relocate or change banks or branches. The nationwide system aims to make pension disbursement simpler, faster and more accessible for retirees.

Ordinarily, the monthly pension under the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS), 1995, is disbursed at the end of the month.

EPFO has now completed the full-scale rollout of CPPS across all its pension-disbursing offices, marking a significant shift from the earlier decentralised arrangement. Previously, zonal and regional offices maintained separate agreements with a limited number of banks, generally three to four.

Under the new system, pensioners can receive their pen-

sion through any bank and do not need to visit a bank for verification when pension payments begin. Pension is credited immediately after release, according to EPFO.

The system also eliminates the need to transfer Pension Payment Orders when pensioners relocate, change banks or switch branches. This is particularly beneficial for retirees who move to their hometowns after retirement.

EPFO said the nationwide system is designed to make pension payments more seamless, accessible and citizen-centric. Reducing administrative hurdles for pensioners nationwide.

India D2C funding shows recovery

NEW DELHI

India's direct-to-consumer (D2C) companies raised \$6 billion in equity funding across nearly 2,000 rounds between 2021 and 2026 year-to-date, with investment showing signs of recovery after a sharp slowdown, according to a Tracxn report released Wednesday.

Annual funding peaked at \$1.6 billion in 2022 before falling to \$824 million in 2024. Funding rebounded to \$898 million in 2025, marking a 9 per cent year-on-year increase.

The recovery was driven largely by seed and early-stage investments. These stages accounted for 70 per cent of total D2C funding in 2025, compared with 38 per cent in 2021. Early-stage funding alone increased 66 per cent from its 2023 low, indicating that capital is increasingly reaching



D2C funding snapshot
\$6 billion: Equity funding raised since 2021
~2,000: Funding rounds recorded
\$898 million: Funding in 2025
70%: Share of 2025 funding from seed and early stages
15: D2C IPOs recorded
105: D2C acquisitions recorded
\$2.3 billion: Combined lifetime funding of five leading companies

younger companies.

Deal activity remained relatively consistent despite fluctuations in funding value. Ev-

ery full year during the period recorded between 307 and 380 funding rounds. Notably, 2024 saw the highest number of rounds even as overall funding value reached its lowest level during the period.

Late-stage funding, meanwhile, declined sharply, falling 69 per cent in value between 2022 and 2025. Its round count, however, returned to the 2021 level of 15.

The sector has also recorded significant exits and public-market activity. Fifteen D2C initial public offerings and 105 acquisitions were recorded between 2021 and 2026 YTD.

Lenskart, Licious, FreshToHome, BlueStone and Country Delight lead the funding rankings, together raising \$2.3 billion over their lifetimes. FreshToHome raised \$15 million in January 2026, while Country Delight secured \$7 million in May.

AI TALENT SURGES IN RETAIL GCCS

NEW DELHI

AI workforce penetration in retail GCCs has more than doubled, rising from 2.1 per cent in 2022 to 4.8 per cent in 2025 and projected to reach 10.6 per cent by 2028, according to a new report on Wednesday.

Retail and consumer GCCs currently employ close to 7,800 professionals in core AI and data roles, with demand for AI and

Data talent standing at 990 positions in 2025.

Of the 180 GCCs assessed, only 22 among the top 50 mega Retail GCCs were found to have established AI capabilities, where they are building, not just consuming AI, according to a TeamLease Digital report.

Bengaluru commands 54 per cent of India's retail GCC AI talent pool with 4,200 professionals, while

senior AI leadership above 8 years of experience remains a scarce, concentrated layer across the country.

Delhi-NCR is a distant second, followed by Hyderabad. Chennai, Mumbai and Pune each hold fewer than 20 senior leaders apiece.

Within this workforce, the senior AI talent pool — professionals with 8 or more years of experience — stand at just 320 individuals nationally. Nearly two-thirds

of that cohort (63 per cent, roughly 202 professionals) sit at the AI engineering lead level, averaging 9 years' experience.

AI/Data directors account for 22 per cent (around 71 professionals, averaging 12 years). At the apex, AI architects and principal scientists represent just 15 per cent of the pool -- approximately 47 professionals nationally, averaging 14-plus years of experience.

Govt tells SIDBI to scale up lending to MSMEs

NEW DELHI

The government has asked the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to scale up lending to MSMEs in rural and semi-urban areas nationwide through the network of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), an official statement said on Wednesday.

Sanjay Lohiya, Secretary, Department of Financial Services (DFS), emphasised at a meeting with top SIDBI and RRB officials the need to synergise the strengths of SIDBI, which understands the credit needs of MSMEs and RRBs, which have an excellent reach across the smaller towns and villages of the country.

RRBs will also be able to achieve their goal of diversifying their loan portfolios by focusing on MSME lending, and rule engine-based underwriting is also expected to help them maintain good as-

set quality, he added.

He also highlighted the importance of MSME cluster data for a focused approach to reaching out to a large number of micro and small units. RRBs were told to contribute towards making the country a next-generation manufacturing hub and also take an active part in Rozgar Melas, conducted by state governments to disseminate financial awareness among MSMEs.

It was further suggested that RRBs make MSME lending through this Co-Lending arrangement an important target for branches. CMD, SIDBI, also urged the RRBs to come forward and make the arrangement a success.

The Co-Lending Origination Platform, developed by SIDBI, is an end-to-end digital platform providing a faster and paperless credit journey, resulting in the quick sanction and disbursement of loans.

INDIA JOB POSTINGS REBOUND IN JULY

NEW DELHI

India's job postings on Indeed rose 1.2 per cent in July 2026, marking a modest recovery after three consecutive months of decline and bringing postings 8.3 per cent above the year-ago level, according to data released by the global job site on Wednesday.

Despite recent volatility, hiring activity in the country's formal economy remains strong, with job postings still 84 per cent above pre-pandemic levels, the data compiled by Indeed said. It stated that the latest rebound indicates that demand for workers continues to remain elevated even as hiring patterns shift across sectors.

Callam Pickering, Senior Economist, Indeed APAC, said Indian job postings staged a modest recovery in July, ending the three-month slide, while remaining well above pre-pandemic levels and continuing to outperform other markets tracked by Indeed.

"The real story is beneath the headline number," Pickering said, pointing to strong demand for healthcare and care-economy roles, even as hiring in technology-related occupations has weakened.

Over the past three months, job postings increased across nearly 80 per cent of occupations, suggesting that hiring strength is broader than the overall headline figures indicate.

Healthcare and care-related occupations recorded some of the strongest gains. Postings for medical technicians increased 30 per cent, while childcare roles rose 26 per cent. Demand for physicians and surgeons also climbed 26 per cent, while therapy-related roles increased 25 per cent.

'Creating models for Global South by investing in youth'

NEW DELHI

Dr Priti Adani, Chairperson of the Adani Foundation, has said that by investing in youth, women and local creators, we are doing more than just solving local challenges we are creating models for the Global South.

Addressing the gathering at the 'AVPN Global Conference 2026' in the national capital, Dr Priti Adani called for greater collaboration, shared learning, and partnerships to help address complex social challenges and take effective solutions to more communities.

The Adani Foundation, the social welfare and development arm of the Adani Group and strategic partner of the 'AVPN Global Conference 2026', hosted the welcome dinner at Bharat Mandapam for nearly 2,000 national and international delegates.

"It is a privilege to welcome philanthropy leaders from across the world to India at a time when the world is looking towards India and Asia as an emerging engine of growth and opportunity. Over three decades, our journey at the Adani Foundation has taught us that lasting change comes from empowering communities to shape their own futures," the Adani Foundation Chairperson emphasised.

"As social challenges become more complex, we must learn from one another, share what works and build partnerships that take impact further. AVPN gives us a



wonderful opportunity to share India's grassroots experience while learning from inspiring ideas across Asia and the world," Dr Priti Adani said.

She said that from metros to mandis and campuses to small towns, India is now innovating everywhere.

"Whether it is a waste management problem or a climate change issue, be it safe drinking water or affordable healthcare, better agricultural practices or innovation up to the last mile, Indian startups are working to solve the nation's problems, big and small," said Dr Priti Adani.

The gathering came as the Adani Foundation marks 30 years of work across India. AVPN is Asia's largest platform for social impact, where over 700 resource providers, innovators and intermediaries from across 43 markets collaborate to mobilise capital.

India Inc acquisitions double, 1/3 fail: Crisil report

NEW DELHI

The 2X surge in mergers and acquisitions shows the resilience of India, with companies increasingly using acquisitions to scale faster, enter new markets and acquire capabilities that would take longer to build organically, a Crisil Ratings report showed on Wednesday.

What sets this cycle apart is the stronger credit backdrop supporting deal-making. Moderating organic capex, lower leverage and prudent funding have strengthened balance sheet flexibility, enhancing companies' ability to absorb acquisition-related risks, said the report.

"Indian corporates are increasingly using M&As to accelerate growth, expand market access and acquire capabilities that would take years to build organically. This is reflected in annual deal volumes, which have more than doubled since fiscal 2017," said Subodh Rai, Managing Director, Crisil Ratings.

The momentum is broad-based, though shaped by sector-specific priorities. For instance, pharma and healthcare, enterprise technology, artificial intelligence, and consumer businesses are using acquisitions to bridge technology, talent, and intellectual-property gaps.

In contrast, cement and metals are pursuing acquisitions for consolidation, reducing build times from four-six years to one-three years.

The resilience of India Inc has been forged through a volatile operating environment over the past decade, marked by frequent disruptions and shorter recovery cycles.

FED INFLATION ROADMAP

Warsh faces pressure at Jackson Hole

NEW YORK

Investors are looking to the annual Jackson Hole symposium for clues about how Federal Reserve Chair Kevin Warsh plans to steer monetary policy as elevated Treasury yields increasingly tighten financial conditions.

Warsh is scheduled to deliver his first speech as Fed chair on Friday at the Wyoming gathering, traditionally a key platform for central bank officials to signal their policy outlook. However, investors do not expect Warsh to follow the forward-guidance approach as-



sociated with previous Fed chairs. Instead, he has urged traders and portfolio managers to focus more closely on market signals.

That approach has left investors seeking greater clarity, particularly after Warsh

appeared to suggest that rising Treasury yields could reduce the need for the Fed to raise interest rates by tightening monetary conditions. The comments have added to concerns over his inflation strategy while consumer prices remain above the Fed's 2% target.

Long-term Treasury yields have also surged amid concerns about rising US government debt and increased bond issuance. The Treasury Department responded by doubling some long-dated bond buybacks, a move officially aimed at supporting liquidity but widely viewed

by investors as an attempt to contain yields.

The temporary relief has highlighted a difficult environment for the Fed, with elevated term premiums adding to borrowing costs. Investors want Warsh to clearly reaffirm the 2% inflation objective and explain how quickly policymakers would act if price pressures remain above target.

Market participants are particularly focused on whether the Fed would tolerate inflation above target for an extended period or pursue a faster return to price stability.

No diplomatic deal possible with Iran 'savages': Netanyahu

Recounting a recent meeting with Trump, Netanyahu said they had discussed the possibility of diplomacy with the Islamic republic.

JERUSALEM

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said a diplomatic deal was not possible with the "savages" who rule Iran as he hailed US President Donald Trump's new campaign of economic pressure.

Recounting a recent meeting with Trump, Netanyahu said they had discussed the possibility of diplomacy with the Islamic republic and added: "I doubt, however, that an agreement can be reached with that group there, with those savages."

"I tell you -- an agreement cannot be reached," Netanyahu told an event late Tuesday at an Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank.

Netanyahu has long been sceptical of diplomacy with Iran, openly campaigning against a 2015 nuclear deal brokered by then US president Barack Obama, but he has been publicly careful not to criticise Trump while he sought a negotiated settlement.

Trump joined Netanyahu in a US-Israeli joint attack on Iran in late February but



agreed to a ceasefire in April in the face of widespread US public opposition to the war, which had sent oil prices spiralling.

Trump on Monday declared "economic D-Day" aimed at destroying Iran's economy, which has already endured years of sanctions, but he has shown reluctance to resume a full-scale war even as he grows frustrated that Tehran will not accept his demands.

Netanyahu voiced support for Trump's economic pressure campaign and said he had told Trump of this "third option", while praising the US president for pursuing it in "a very, very, very strong way". Trump had chosen to target

Iran-Oman agree on temporary Hormuz route

Muscat: Iran and Oman have agreed on a temporary maritime route for ships travelling through the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said on Wednesday. He, however, warned that the waterway will not fully reopen until the United States fulfils its commitments under an interim peace deal signed in June, which has since lapsed. The US-Israel war on Iran, which began with strikes on Tehran on February 28, has effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz to shipping, sending global energy markets into crisis. The narrow waterway through which one-fifth of global oil and natural gas supplies from Gulf producers are shipped in peacetime has become a major bone of contention between Washington and Tehran, and disagreements over the critical channel continue to hinder any hopes of a lasting peace plan. Since the US bombing of parts of Iran in July following more disputes over the strait, Iran has refused to hold direct talks with it. Even though active warfare has since paused again – replaced by a strategy of piling economic pressure on Iran – it has maintained that it will speak directly to only Oman about the future of the waterway, which passes through the territorial waters of the two countries.

not just Iran itself but decided on "tightening the siege on those who assist this regime, this terrible dictatorship. This is very important," Netanyahu said.

The Israeli leader had

pushed for years for a US attack on Iran, whose Shia cleric-run state supports anti-Israel armed groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas, which led the devastating October 7, 2023 attack on Israel.

14 Infants killed in Islamabad fire

A nursery fire at Islamabad's main public hospital killed newborns, triggering grief, anger and questions over safety standards and emergency preparedness

ISLAMABAD

At least 14 infants were killed in a devastating fire at a state-run hospital in Pakistan's capital Islamabad on Wednesday, with officials saying the blaze began after a blast in an air conditioner inside the nursery ward.

The fire erupted around 7 am local time on the third floor of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences' mother and child health ward. Health Minister Mustafa Kamal said the blast triggered the fire and that the presence of large amounts of oxygen in the ward helped the flames spread rapidly.

There were 16 newborns inside the ward when the fire broke out, with one infant reportedly rescued. Television footage showed the ward badly gutted, with blackened walls, damaged equipment and smoke rising from the



FIRE TRAGEDY
• At least 14 infants killed.
• 16 newborns were reportedly inside.
• One infant was rescued.
• Fire followed an air-conditioner blast.
• Health secretary suspended after investigation ordered.

building. The ward was later sealed off.

Parents gathered outside in anguish, with some accusing the hospital of inadequate staffing and poor fire safety. One mother, Javeria, said there had been no doctor or

nurse in the ward and that families were not allowed to see the bodies of their children after they were removed.

Another parent, Mudasir, alleged the building lacked fire safety measures and proper emergency exits, saying only one door was open for families visiting their children.

Kamal rejected claims that doctors and staff were absent when the fire began. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif ordered an investigation and suspended the health secretary over the tragedy.

The incident has renewed concerns over safety standards at Pakistan's under-resourced public hospitals.

“It is not God's will... I don't accept it.”
— Javeria, who lost her newborn

Quick Read

Taiwan Prez pushes \$6.6 bn military drone bill

TAIPEI

Taiwan must demonstrate its resolve to defend itself and pass a six-year, T\$210 billion (\$6.6 billion) special budget to buy military drones, President Lai Ching-te said on Wednesday ahead of a crucial vote



in the opposition-controlled parliament. Taiwan's government says the plans to buy some 210,000 new military drones cannot wait, given the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East have shown the importance of uncrowded weapons in modern warfare.

Brazil vote offers opposing politics, fiscal outcomes

SAO PAULO

Brazil's October election offers voters yet another stark left-versus-right choice, but investors see less difference on the fiscal front with debt likely to keep rising under either candidate. Flávio Bolsonaro, the son of far-right fire-brand and former President Jair Bolsonaro, has painted a picture of a troubled economy as he aims to unseat leftist President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, whom polls show holding a narrow lead. Analysts are pricing a Lula victory followed by an adjustment that only slows the pace of debt accumulation, but markets are skeptical that either candidate could make a credible start on significantly changing the trajectory of debt.

BACK-TO-BACK STORMS BATTER SOUTHERN CHINA

HONG KONG

China's coastal and southern regions are bracing for days of intense rainfall as Typhoon Narra moves inland and Typhoon Saudel approaches the eastern seaboard, forcing authorities to evacuate tens of thousands of people and suspend businesses and tourist activities.

Narra made landfall as a tropical storm in the southern island province of Hainan after lingering over the Beibu Gulf for several days. The storm dumped heavy rain across Hainan, Guangxi and Guangdong, pushing rivers above warning levels and flooding low-lying areas.

Narra and Saudel, together with tropical cyclones Gaenari and Atsani, have formed a rare group of four storms simultaneously swirling across the Northwest Pacific and South China Sea, according to China's Meteorological Administration.

Heavy rainfall is expected to continue across southern China even as communities deal with the effects of recent



FOUR STORMS AT ONCE

downpours.

Attention is also turning to Saudel, which is forecast to make landfall along China's eastern coast between Zhejiang and Fujian provinces between Thursday and Friday. Its outer rain bands could stretch towards Guangxi, potentially adding to rainfall in already affected areas.

Saudel crossed Japan's Okinawa prefecture early Wednesday, bringing destructive

winds and rough seas. Nearly 35,000 homes lost power, while 92 flights serving airports across Okinawa were cancelled. All Nippon Airways also suspended flights to and from Naha Airport.

Taiwanese forecasters said Saudel was tracking north of the island and was expected to weaken gradually, although moderate rainfall could continue in parts of Taiwan through Friday.

Bill Gates plans to meet Chinese Prez

SAN FRANCISCO

Bill Gates is looking to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping later this year, eager to propose global efforts to mitigate the growing risks posed by artificial intelligence. The Microsoft co-founder and billionaire philanthropist in an interview that he believes China might agree to restricting potentially dangerous AI model releases if the U.S. took initiative on that first.

"The whole world would go along with that," said Gates, who met with Xi three years ago, when he was the first foreign entrepreneur to be hosted by the Chinese president

post-pandemic.

He said he'd like to propose that countries monitor AI's ability to create molecules and carry out biological attacks something that would not get in the way of any tech industry's development. Gates' staff are working to finalize a meeting with Xi for his next China trip, his spokesman said, scheduled for November.

President Xi "might be surprised by how vehement I am," Gates said. He said China is protecting children from AI companion addiction, but he believes few leaders globally are rising to the occasion to get ahead of a litany of potential harms from AI.

"Yes, in the past, technology never did this. This time is different. This is like an evolutionary milestone that needs incredible policy management by society as a whole." China's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Gates struck a more optimistic note about AI in January, but since then he has become concerned that it can conduct attacks while supplanting jobs and hooking users psychologically.

For instance, technology from OpenAI, Anthropic and Meta recently hacked real-world websites in what were supposed to be isolated cybersecurity evaluations.

US spy chief held talks with Russian counterparts: Kremlin

MOSCOW: U.S. CIA Director John Ratcliffe held talks with Russian intelligence officials during his visit to Moscow but did not meet President Vladimir Putin, the Kremlin said on Wednesday.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that Putin had been briefed on the outcome of Ratcliffe's talks, which come as the war in Ukraine is escalating and as efforts to reach a lasting peace deal between the U.S. and Iran have stalled.

Peskov declined to disclose what had been discussed or to provide any further details however. "All I can tell you is that there have been contacts via the security services. I can tell you that there have been no meetings with the Russian president. Naturally, President Putin is kept informed of everything without delay," said Peskov.

Asked if visits by such senior U.S. officials could help improve the dire state of U.S.-Russia relations, Peskov said that contacts between the two countries' intelligence agencies were a positive thing. "These contacts often continue even during the most difficult periods in bilateral relations. Our president, incidentally, has spoken about this. However, it is still too early to say to what extent this will, overall, help to steer our bilateral relations out of the profound crisis in which they currently find themselves," he said.

Harry, Meghan's media storm shows power and peril of brand

LONDON

If Prince Harry and his wife Meghan were hoping the press would give them an easier time on their return to Britain, the frenzied reporting around her potential new acting role may indicate how they, and their brand, will fare.

With most royal commentators flummoxed by the couple's imminent return to Britain six years after they left for the U.S., reports emerged that Meghan was in talks to appear in a Guy Ritchie Netflix crime drama, before a new report said a backlash had prompted the offer to be withdrawn.

While neither side confirmed nor denied any talks, branding experts said it showed what the couple would offer to brands and entertainment groups as they build their life outside the

royal family: huge media interest, polarised opinions and drama.

But it also shows the challenge they will face as they seek to promote the charities and brands they work with and attempt to maintain some kind of privacy, in a country where polling shows they have become unpopular, at least among older people.

"You can't buy this kind of publicity for a TV show," entertainment journalist Caroline Frost. Mark Borkowski, a British PR guru, agreed: "Both Harry and Meghan give people visibility. They can generate an audience."

Harry (41), younger son of King Charles, and Meghan (45) are returning to Britain six years after they cited the intense media scrutiny as one reason they were quitting royal duties to carve out independent careers, backed by commercial tie-ups.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, AANAND S S/o P R SANTHANA KRISHNAN, R/o Flat No. 1103, T11, 11th Floor, L and T Raintree Boulevard, Bellary Road, Shabari Nagar, Byatarayanapura, Bangalore, Karnataka-560092, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as AANAND SANTHANA KRISHNAN.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Divya Ramakant Naik W/o Pradeep Naik R/o #185, Chinnapura, VTC: Arbail, PO: Idagundi, Sub District : Yellapur, District: Uttara Kannada, State: Karnataka-581337, have changed my name to Prithvi Pradeep Naik

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that in the Advertisement published on 05-08-2026, a typographical/ clerical error occurred regarding a registered document. Incorrectly Published As: Registered Discharge Deed executed by S. Ramakrishna S/o Siddappa in favour of Munireddy S/o Narayanareddy. Correct Reading: Registered Discharge Deed executed by SMFG Credit India Company Limited in favour of Munireddy S/o Narayanareddy. All concerned parties, financial institutions, and the general public are requested to take note of this correction and read all connected/ further documents accordingly. K. S. HARISH KUMAR, B.A., L.L.B. Advocate Office: Near Kishore School, Above Apollo Pharmacy, Beside Santhoshi Matha Temple, Bangalore Main Road, Chinthamani. Mobile: 9980110692

ORDER OF FREEDOM

UKRAINE AWARDS MUSK HIGH STATE HONOUR

KYIV

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has bestowed one of Ukraine's top state honours on SpaceX owner Elon Musk as Kyiv seeks to expand use of the company's Starlink terminals, which provide battlefield communications for Ukrainian forces.

Under a presidential decree published on the presidential website on Wednesday, Musk was awarded the Order of

Freedom. The decree praised Musk "for outstanding personal contributions to protecting human life and freedom, and for developing relations between the peoples of Ukraine and the United States of America."

Musk switched on the Starlink satellite internet service over Ukraine shortly after Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. It has become the lifeblood of Ukraine's battlefield communications



and a tool for piloting drones.

Musk agreed to turn off thousands of Russian "grey-market" Starlinks in Ukraine this year, causing problems for Russian forces, at the behest of former Defence Minister Mykhailo Fedorov before he was dismissed in July.

Ukraine has now asked to use Starlink over Russian territory as it seeks to attack targets including launchers

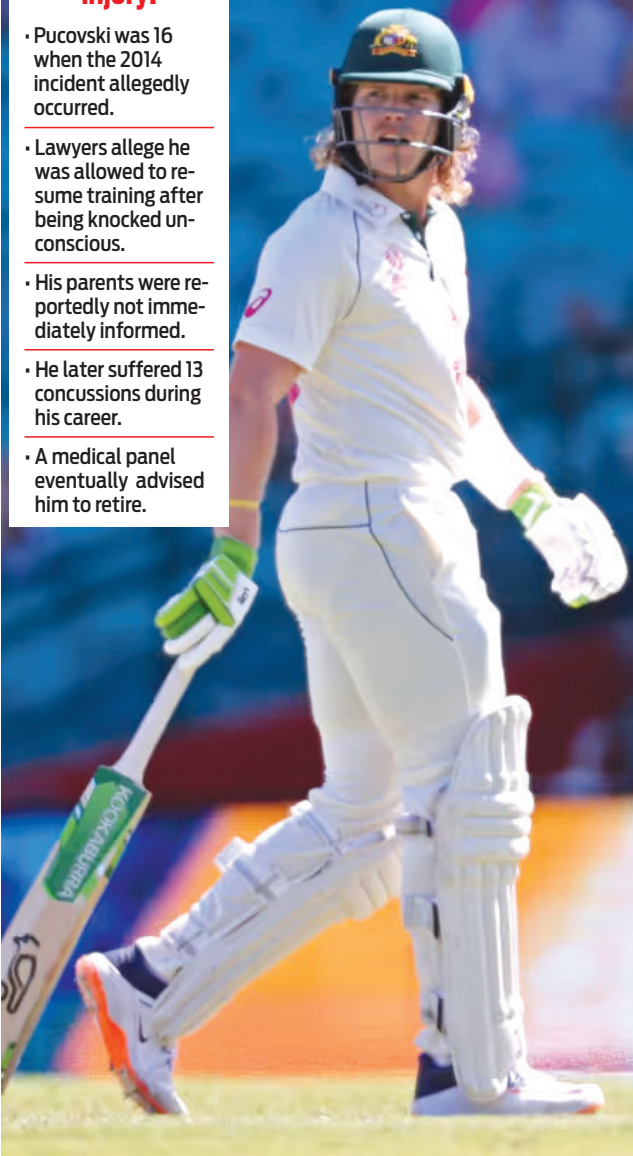
for ballistic missiles that are wreaking destruction on Ukrainian cities.

Zelenskyy has said he was told that Musk opposed the move as a "major escalation" of the war, but that Ukraine had "started to receive a different, more encouraging feedback."

Using Starlink over Russian territory could reduce capabilities that Russia is relying on to drag out the war, Zelenskyy said.

Roadmap of his injury:

- Pucovski was 16 when the 2014 incident allegedly occurred.
- Lawyers allege he was allowed to resume training after being knocked unconscious.
- His parents were reportedly not immediately informed.
- He later suffered 13 concussions during his career.
- A medical panel eventually advised him to retire.



Pucovski Sues School Over Concussion

SYDNEY

Retired Australia batter Will Pucovski has launched legal action against his former school Brighton Grammar, alleging it failed to follow concussion protocols after he was knocked unconscious during an Australian rules football training session in 2014.

Pucovski was 16 when his head allegedly collided with a teammate's knee during an aggressive physical drill. His lawyers claim the coach had urged players to "go in hard" after a heavy defeat to Scotch College. The claim alleges Pucovski was assisted from the field but later allowed to take part in another drill without appropriate medical assessment.

His parents, according to the writ filed in the Supreme Court of Victoria, were not immediately informed about the incident. In the following days, Pucovski reportedly developed severe headaches, blurred vision

and nausea. His parents eventually took him to hospital, where doctors advised him to stop physical activity and stay away from school while recovering.

Pucovski's lawyers allege the 2014 incident caused a traumatic brain injury from which he never fully recovered. They further claim the injury left him more vulnerable to subsequent head trauma during his cricket career.

Pucovski endured a succession of concussions and ultimately suffered 13 during his career. A medical panel eventually advised him to end his playing career. Pucovski, who announced his retirement from professional cricket last year at 27, had been regarded as one of Australia's most promising batting talents. The legal action now places renewed focus on the consequences of concussion and the duty of schools to protect young athletes.

Jadeja's DRS Woes Stretch To 22

COLOMBO: Ravindra Jadeja's run with the Decision Review System continued as the spinner failed with a review during the second Test against Sri Lanka. The unsuccessful challenge extended his streak to 22 consecutive reviews as a bowler without overturning an umpire's decision.

Jadeja convinced his captain to review an LBW appeal against Keshara Nuwantha. However, replays showed the batter had edged the delivery onto his pad, leaving India to lose a review.

The spinner's last successful review as a bowler came in July 2023 during a Test against West Indies in Dominica. Kumar Roach had



Jadeja's Test Milestones
350 Test wickets for India
First Indian left-arm bowler to reach the mark
Fifth Indian overall with 350 Test wickets
Third left-arm spinner globally to reach 350
Fourth player with 4,000-plus runs and 350-plus wickets

the decision was incorrect and was overturned.

Since then, Jadeja has struggled to make successful calls. Of his 22 unsuccessful reviews, four have ended with umpire's call, while India have lost 18 challenges.

The sequence comes despite Jadeja reaching milestones in the series.

In the first Test against Sri Lanka, he became the first Indian left-arm bowler to claim 350 Test wickets. Zaheer Khan is second among Indian left-arm bowlers with 311 wickets.

Jadeja, 37, is the fifth Indian to reach 350 Test wickets, joining Anil Kumble, Ravichandran Ashwin, Kapil Dev and Harbhajan Singh. Globally, he is the third left-arm spinner to reach the mark.

He has also joined a group of Test all-rounders with more than 4,000 runs and 350 wickets, becoming the fourth player to achieve the double after Kapil Dev, Ian Botham and Daniel Vettori.

'The real test lies ahead': Mirabai Chanu

NEW DELHI

As the thirst for a maiden Asian Games medal gets stronger every day, Saikhom Mirabai Chanu is leaving no stone unturned to win the only global medal that has eluded the Tokyo Olympics silver medallist. Staying injury-free ahead of the September 19-October 4 Games in Aichi-Nagoya remains Mirabai's topmost priority.

Two men who have been part of Mirabai's stellar journey have been her coach Vijay Sharma and American strength and conditioning coach Dr Aaron Horschig. The association with Dr Horschig started in November 2020 and continues till today.

"We have a video call every Thursday with him and we discuss everything about training, recovery and the next steps. Everything is reviewed to the finest detail and since Dr Horschig was a weightlifter himself, he knows every muscle in the body. This constant review has kept me in shape," Mirabai told SAI Media.

The quest for the Asian Games has been relentless. Mirabai and team did not waste a day after winning the gold medal at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow this time. The CWG organisers had dismantled the weightlifting hall but Mirabai, Sharma and physio Rohit Chhabria found a gymnasium and paid for a training session in Glasgow.

"I was straight back to training at Modinagar. In fact, I did not go home (in Manipur) and I have set myself a challenge 'no going home till I win a medal at the Asian Games,'" said Mirabai.

Injuries have jinxed Mirabai's quest for an Asian Games medal. At the last Asian Games in Hangzhou, Mirabai finished fourth in the 49 kg category after a hip and thigh injury ruined her campaign in the snatch section itself. In the 2018 edition in Jakarta, Mirabai was ruled out with a severe back injury. Despite the hat-trick of Commonwealth Games.

North Korea Plans Smaller Asian Games Team

HANGZHOU

North Korea is set to send around 100 athletes competing in 14 sports to the Asian Games in Japan later this year, according to the secretary general of the country's Olympic Committee.

The planned delegation is significantly smaller than the 185 athletes North Korea sent across 18 sports at the previous Asian Games in Hangzhou in 2023. Despite the reduction, Pyongyang is hoping its smaller contingent can improve on its medal tally from the last edition.

North Korea won 11 gold, 18 silver and 10 bronze medals in Hangzhou, making the upcoming participation an important test of the country's sporting strength after years of restricted international competition.

According to Korean media reports, Olympic Committee secretary general Ko Chol Ho told the Tokyo-based Choson Sinbo newspaper that he hoped the reduced team would win more medals than it did three years ago.



North Korea sharply restricted overseas sporting participation during the COVID-19 pandemic. The country also did not send athletes to the Tokyo Summer Olympics in 2021, citing the global health crisis.

Its limited international participation continued beyond the pandemic, with North Korea also absent from the 2022 and 2026 Winter Olympics.

The 20th Asian Games will be held in Nagoya and other cities across Japan's Aichi prefecture from September 19 to October 4. More than 11,000 athletes from 45 countries are expected to compete.

North Korea's participation comes against a backdrop of

North Korea at Asian Games:

- **Athletes:** Around 100
- **Sports:** 14
- **Last Asian:** Hangzhou 2023
- **Previous delegation:** 185 athletes in 18 sports
- **2023 medal tally:** 11 gold, 18 silver, 10 bronze
- **Asian Games:** Sep 19–October 4

frequently strained relations with Japan. Despite those tensions, the country is preparing to return to one of Asia's biggest sporting events with a smaller but potentially ambitious delegation.

Lyon's Australia Spot Faces Fresh Pressure

MELBOURNE

Nathan Lyon's position in Australia's Test side is facing fresh scrutiny as selectors weigh the merits of an all-pace attack for upcoming series against South Africa and New Zealand.

Lyon, Australia's second-highest Test wicket-taker with 571 wickets from 143 matches, had



Alex Carey: "Nathan's a high-class bowler, has been for a number of years."

Alex Carey: "Australia's quicks were getting the job done, resulting in fewer overs for Lyon."

Nathan Lyon: "The veteran remains convinced he belongs in Australia's Test side despite growing competition."

been an automatic selection for more than a decade. However, changing conditions and the strength of Australia's pace attack could limit his role as he approaches his 39th birthday in November.

After missing the final two Ashes Tests because of a hamstring injury, Lyon returned for the Bangladesh series as a specialist spinner supporting Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood.

His recall was not guaranteed for the second Test after he took 1-125 in the opening defeat and was out-bowled by Bangladesh's spin-bowling all-rounder Mehidy

Hasan Miraz. Australia even considered selecting Scott Boland alongside an all-pace attack in Mackay, but the pitch conditions ultimately favoured Lyon.

The spinner responded with 3-25 in Bangladesh's second innings, although his impact was limited because the visitors collapsed for 64 and 95 across their two innings.

Wicketkeeper Alex Carey acknowledged that Australia's fast bowlers had done most of the work, leaving Lyon with fewer overs.

However, Carey also backed the veteran's quality and experience.

Lyon remains adamant that he can continue contributing at the highest level. Despite the injury setback and questions over workload, he does not believe Australia should abandon a specialist spinner.

The selectors must now balance Lyon's remarkable record against evolving conditions and an increasingly dominant pace attack.

Pakistan fast bowler Aimen Anwar retires from international cricket

LAHORE

Pakistan fast bowler Aimen Anwar has announced his retirement from international cricket with immediate effect, bringing her career to a close after representing the country at three T20 World Cups and the 2022 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) confirmed on Wednesday that Aimen is stepping away from international cricket after representing Pakistan in eight ODIs and 37 T20Is from July 2016 to February 2023.

The right-arm medium-fast bowler made her T20I debut against England in Southampton in July 2016, becoming Pakistan women's 37th player to earn a T20I cap. She made her ODI debut against Bangladesh in Colombo in February 2017 and went on to take four wickets in the 50-over format.

In T20Is, Aimen took 29 wickets, finishing with 33 international wickets across formats in her 45-match Pakistan career.

Aimen was part of Pakistan's squads at the Women's T20 World Cups in 2018, 2020 and 2022-23. She also featured in Pakistan's campaign at the 2022 ICC Women's



Cricket World Cup in New Zealand.

Her return to the national set-up for the 2020 T20 World Cup followed the selectors recalling her after her performances in domestic cricket. The PCB had included her in Pakistan's 15-member squad for the tournament in Australia.

After stepping away from international cricket, Aimen has stayed involved in the sport through broadcasting and has now begun another chapter as an official. She made her debut as a match referee at the ongoing National Women's U19 Tournament on Monday, after successfully completing her match-referee induction course in January this year.

Her international career spanned nearly seven years, during which she was part of several important phases in Pakistan women's cricket and featured alongside some of the country's leading players.

Syndrela Das, Payas Jain included in TOPS Development Scheme

NEW DELHI

Rising Indian table tennis players Syndrela Das and Payas Jain have been included in the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) Development Scheme, strengthening the country's focus on nurturing young talent ahead of the 2026 Asian Games, 2030 Commonwealth Games and the 2036 Olympics.

Seventeen-year-old Syndrela, who hails from Kolkata, earned her place in the development programme following a string of impressive performances on the international stage. The teenager won a silver medal in the Girls' Doubles event and a bronze in the Girls' Singles competition at the Asian Youth Championships in Thailand earlier this year.

Syndrela had also enjoyed a highly successful 2023 season, when she won National Ranking age-group titles in the Under-15, Under-17 and Under-19 singles categories. She subsequently made the transition to the senior national circuit in 2025.

Earlier this year, TOPS had created a dedicated group for young table tennis players in the 14-17 age bracket as part of an effort to build India's bench strength for the 2030 Commonwealth Games and the 2036 Olympic Games.

MAN UNITED'S FERNANDES NAMED PFA PLAYER OF THE YEAR



OLD TRAFFORD

Bruno Fernandes, the lynchpin of Manchester United's attack who provided a Premier League-record 21 assists during the 2025-26 season, was named the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) Player of the Year.

Club captain Fernandes, a United player since 2020, also

scored nine goals as he helped the club finish third in the English top flight. Manchester City forward Khadija Shaw, who was the Women's Super League top scorer with 21 goals, was named as the Women's Player of the Year for the second time, having previously won the award in 2024.

The men's annual award, voted for by members of the players' union, has now been won by United players 12 times, more than any other club in England and Wales.

Fernandes is the second Portuguese player to win the award after Cristiano Ronaldo won it twice in a row in 2007 and 2008.

The 31-year-old thrived as coach Michael Carrick allowed United's front four more freedom to control the attack. "Bruno can just create moments. He's bright. I think that little bit of freedom suits him. He's got a natural brain,"

Carrick said in February.

Fernandes has scored 110 goals and provided 106 assists for United. He reached 200 goal involvements (goals and assists) in just 314 matches, the second-quickest United player to reach the milestone in the Premier League era after Wayne Rooney, who did the same in 295 matches.

The Young Player of the Year award went to 21-year-old Manchester City left back Nico O'Reilly after a breakthrough campaign that also saw him win the Premier League Young Player of the Season award. England international O'Reilly made 53 appearances for City in all competitions, scoring nine goals. Arsenal's 22-year-old striker Olivia Smith was named the Women's Young Player of the Year for the second time in a row.

PFA Premier League Team of the Year: Goalkeeper: David Raya (Arsenal).